

General was right in 1786, when he said that "the Collectors from the extent of their districts cannot, without a local enquiry in the several divisions, secure the regular realisation of the revenue and must be still less able to preserve the ryots and other inferior tenants from the oppressions and exaction to which they are in this country so peculiarly liable from the superior landlords and renters. The late appointment of a Commissioner to prevent the depredations of the dakaitis in the Sundarbans was a proof of the present number of established Magistrates being insufficient for the preservation of the peace and good order of the community."

The Governor General* approved Harrington's first proposal which was to divide up the revenue of whole zamindāries and *tālucs* and to place geographical districts under the sole authority of one Collector, Judge and Magistrate. He, however, gave the Board permission to state their reasons if they thought that the objections to dividing the jamas of zamindāries outweighed the advantages to ryots of making the authority of the local Collector comprehensive and compact. This apparently they did, as Harrington's scheme has never been carried out in its entirety. Mymensingh itself affords a striking example, as a whole thānā of over 200 square miles (Dewānganj) is still borne on the Revenue Roll of Rangpur.

In 1790 Bhulua was separated from Mymensingh. Stephen Bayard, who had succeeded Wroughton, writes to the Board that he has found a good place for his head-quarters at Kāgdaha between Sawāra and Baiganbāri. Baiganbāri would have been chosen in preference, but for the fact that the river had already washed away part of the indigo factory premises there. The Collector did hold his office at Baiganbāri temporarily. Kāgdaha, Nāsirabād or Mymensingh, as it is variously called, has been the head-quarters since 1791.

In 1845, the Serājganj thānā was transferred from Pābna to Mymensingh. In 1866,† it was retransferred to the same district, but Dewānganj came to Mymensingh from Bogra, and Pāculla or Atia (now Tangāil) from Dacca. As the area of Serājganj was 306 square miles and that of Dewānganj 262 square miles, and that of Atia 231, the result was still further to increase the area of the district. Colonel Macdonald notified all the boundaries of the district in Notification No. 121 of 1st

* Letter of Lord Cornwallis, 9th December 1789.

† *Calcutta Gazette*, 1866, 15th February. Dewānganj was part of Rangpur at the Revenue Survey and had only been attached to Bogra for four or five years.

October 1874. In 1891 Government declared that the boundary between Mymensingh and Pabna, Bogra and Rungpur on the west side of the Jamuna should be the main stream of that river as it was found by the Collectorate kanungos after local enquiry each cold weather. The management of the Government estates in the bed of the river is not necessarily handed over from one Collector to another in consequence of this order. It was intended to settle the question of jurisdiction in criminal cases. The Sub-Inspectors on either side try to avoid enquiry in big rioting cases on the ground that the area is outside their jurisdiction, and it still happens occasionally that the Subdivisional Officers of Tangail and Serājganj take up the same case, giving criminal justice some appearance of partiality.

Another boundary that has caused incessant trouble is that with the Gāro Hills. Until 1822, Rungpur and Goalpārā formed one district and the Gāro Hills, though not permanently settled, was a kind of appendage, in which both the landlords of Goalpārā and Mymensingh were trying to collect cesses and to establish the usual zamindāri rights.

The disputes about the boundary came to a head in 1857, and after passing through the local Revenue and Civil Courts, went to the High Court who, in 1868, passed a partial decree in favour of the Susung Rājā. Government appealed to the Privy Council, but before the Privy Council could give a decision, Act XXII of 1869 excluded the Gāro Hills from the jurisdiction of Civil, Revenue and Criminal Courts.

This Act abolished all zamindāri rights in the villages north of the Revenue Survey line of Mymensingh and the Susung Rāj received 1½ lakhs as compensation. The sum was probably not inadequate at the time, but the estate now regrets the bargain, maintaining that the jungle and *kheddah* rights, which they then lost, were the most profitable part of their pargana.

It follows that as far as the original Gāro Hills is concerned, that is from the Ehogāi river eastwards to Sylhet, the administrative boundary of the districts and the line of proprietary title coincide. In 1875, however, about 259 square miles of the permanently-settled pargana of Karāibāri in the district of Goalpārā was transferred to the Gāro Hills, with the result that from the junction of the Rungpur, Goalpārā and Mymensingh districts round the south-western corner of the present Gāro Hills district to the Bhogāi, the boundary was not touched by Act XXII of 1869. The Revenue Survey of Goalpārā in

1852—1855 was on the 1 inch scale and those of Rungpur and Mymensingh in 1855—1857 on the 4 inch scale and there are many gaps and overlappings. Badgley's demarcation in 1876 did not follow either line exactly, and it was impossible to decide the disputes which arose between the tenants of the rival landlords. Eventually in 1903 the Chief Commissioner of Assam decided that the Goalpārā Revenue Survey was the right boundary on the west and the Mymensingh Revenue Survey on the south. Mr. O'Donel demarcated the Revenue Survey of Goalpārā as far as Pabādurakātā Hāt in 1905, and for this small portion the Revenue Survey of Goalpārā was notified as the legal boundary in March 1912.

The principle adopted by the Revenue Surveyors throughout the whole boundary was to include all flat agricultural lands in Mymensingh even at the expense of including certain out-lying *tīlās* or hills also. Some of the northern villages of Mymensingh are almost entirely hill and jungle and many of the pillars stand on the slopes of quite high cliffs.

Jamālpur was created a separate subdivision in 1845 out of the Serājganj, Hājipur, Pingna and Sherpur thānās. As the result of the changes in district boundaries in 1866, Atia and Dewānganj thānās were substituted for Serājganj. Kishorganj with its present boundaries was made a subdivision in 1860. Jamālpur included about two-fifths of the district and became entirely unmanageable. In 1867 Government sanctioned the scheme for the existing five subdivisions. Subdivi-
sions.

In 1914 their area and population stood as follows :—

	Area.	Population.
	Sq. miles.	
Sadar ...	1,822	1,185,330
Jamālpur ...	1,233	813,306
Tangāil ...	1,061	1,049,772
Kishorganj ...	985	822,719
Netrakona ...	1,148	655,295

Thānās were established in 1817, when Mr. Thomas Packenham was Collector. In 1823 there were 12 and in 1862 14. Though their names and sites changed in some cases, *e.g.*, Futtehpur instead of Kendua, Pingna instead of Gopalpur, Nikli instead of Kishorganj, in the main they corresponded with the 19 revenue thānās dealt with by Chandra in preparing his jurisdiction list in 1903—1907. Since then the temporary outposts have been converted into independent police thānās. and the process is still going on. Thān

The impossibility of keeping Mymensingh much longer as one district has been admitted over and over again. In the days of the Mughal Emperors, the *Nāib Nāzim's* functions as described in Stirling's letter to Government, "were to chastise the turbulent, to protect the weak and the *mālguzars*, to administer justice to complainants according to Muhammadan law, to be cautious that no one should sell to ill-disposed persons lead, powder, or any implements of war, collect revenues and maintain establishments of war and boats (*nawāra*)."

In reality most of these duties were only nominally discharged and the zamindārs were granted *jāgīrs* for disposing of civil and criminal cases. Only appeals went to the *Kāzis* and *Misadēls*, who were the lieutenants of the *Nāzim*. The latter also had a regular council to assist him, consisting of *Kaziul Quzzat* (Chief Justice), a *Mufti or Pandit* (Legal Remembrancer), a *Daroga a-adalat* (Registrar) and a *Muktāsih* (Police Magistrate).

After the English took over the Diwāni in 1765, one official took charge both of the revenue (*huzuri*) and the *nizāmat*, or criminal and civil justice, but the control of the criminal courts and the police was still left in the hands of the Muhammadan officials. From 1776—1781 there was a Provincial Council at Dacca, and after that the Collector of each district was in charge of the whole administration. In 1793, Mymensingh was given a Judge of its own. In 1820, there were 5 English Judges at Dacca for appeal and circuit, and Shakespear was Superintendent of Police for the whole of the Dacca, Murshidabād and Pābna Divisions. The first Superintendent of Police for Mymensingh alone was appointed in 1864.

In 1867, there were two Munsiffs at Sadar, one at Atia, Bājitpur, Sankanda (Fulpur), Sherpur, Sambhuganj (3 miles from Sadar), Netrakona, Nikli and Jamālpur.

There are now 18 Munsiffs and 4 Subordinate Judges as well as 2 and sometimes 3 District and Sessions Judges.

The Executive staff has undergone corresponding development. Up to the first partition there were often only 2 European officials in the district. Since 1905 there has usually been an Additional Magistrate, 3 European Policemen, and Civilian officers in most of the subdivisions. Nevertheless the volume of work has gone on increasing and the District Administration Committee of 1913 quotes the Collector of Dacca to prove the impossibility of the present conditions.

"As matters stand at present, we are neglecting the work which matters most, because neglect does not show and in

order that we may do work which is intrinsically of no greater importance, but which must have the preference, because it comes more immediately to the notice of Government. It is because the mass of the people are so submissive to authority and cherish the belief that British Government desires to do justice, that they do not make their voice heard, when the District Magistrate fails to save them from such delay in obtaining justice in the criminal courts as amounts to a denial of justice, because he has no time to control the works of the courts; when he fails to give a fair price for homesteads because he has no time to control the work of the Land Acquisition Deputy Collector; when he allows the holdings of *Khas Mahal* ryots to be sold and fall into the hands of mahājans, because he exercises no control over collections and allows alternations of slackness and undue severity; when he fails to redress the grievances of ryots in Wards' estates, because of the volume of complaints and the passive resistance of estate subordinates."

So long ago as 1876 the partition file opened with proposals to make Jamālpur and Tangāil a separate district with head-quarters at Jamālpur. In 1884 the scheme was again discussed, and in 1899 it came up in connection with Mr. Savage's enquiry on the notoriety of the district for outrages on women. He thought it impossible for one Superintendent of Police or Magistrate to keep an eye on 6 Inspectors and 75 Sub-Inspectors. In 1908 it was proposed to have two districts each with their head-quarters at Mymensingh. The recent committee have recommended three districts with head-quarters at Mymensingh, Gopālpur and Kishorganj.

The following table gives some indication of the difference in work between Mymensingh and Rungpur, except the 24-Parganas the nearest in size and population to Mymensingh of those districts which have not been recommended for partition :—

	Mymensingh.	Rungpur.
Sessions cases ...	... 156	36
Magistrate's cases ...	... 11,894	2,696
Civil suits ...	... 54,616	31,121
Schools ...	... 160	54
Primary schools ...	... 2,352	1,205
Estates ...	... 9,955	681
Separate accounts ...	... 7,626	526
Letters received ...	... 21,353	9,426

In 1912 there were 403 Pleaders and barristers and 384

Mukhteārs and 96 Revenue Agents. The days have long since passed when it was possible to adopt Shaistā Khān's system and to put a premium on quick disposal by placing both plaintiff and defendant in jail, until the case was decided.

In Jamālpur and Sadar, the Honorary Magistrates do quite a fair share of the petty criminal work. In Sherpur the Rāi Bāhādur Rādhā Ballabh Chaudhury has for a long time held powers not only to sit singly but to take complaints. The Rāi Bāhādur Chāru Chandra Chaudhury now has the same powers, and in consequence the Sherpur and Nālitabāri thānās almost form a separate subdivision and throw very little work on the Subdivisional Officer of Jamālpur. There are benches of Honorary Magistrates at Sadar, and, in addition to those at the subdivisional head-quarters, Honorary Magistrates sit at Bājitpur and Bhairab.

Crime.

The morality of the district as regards women is generally low, and Mymensingh was for a long time notorious for the prevalence of such crimes as rape, kidnapping and abduction. "The *nika* system of marriage in Mymensingh district tends to multiply offences of this class, while the absence of any general registry of marriages and divorces prevents proof being had of the facts necessary to support the charges in Court." Since Reynolds gave this explanation of the evil reputation of the district for serious crime, Muhammadan Registrars of Marriages or *Kāzis* have been established by Government. Even under this system, the validity of many marriages must be doubtful, and, when the girl is taken away by a rival suitor, a case of kidnapping is often put in as a cheap means of settling the validity of the marriage. Similarly in rape cases the woman, usually a widow or a married woman, is often a consenting party, and the cases are brought to establish the honour of the family only when the intrigue becomes a public scandal.

As late as 1899, five special Inspectors were appointed to investigate cases of female outrage, but they were abolished in the following year. In 1899 Mr. Savage, then Member of the Board, was placed on special deputation. At the present day there is no reason to suppose that violent outrages on women are more common than in other districts inhabited chiefly by Muhammadans. It is possible that as Mr. Commissioner Abercombie wrote in 1861 they were increased in the past by false cases encouraged by the severity of the sentences awarded to genuine offenders.

At present burglary is by far the most common form of crime, and rioting, abduction and murder follow in the order named.

The great majority of the petty criminal cases have their origin in land disputes, although they often appear under the guise of rescuing cattle from the pounds or petty assaults. What Reynolds wrote in 1872 in this connection is equally true to-day, though the District Settlement is gradually introducing the very improvements he suggests :—

“The number of complaints before the Magistrate of criminal trespass, forcible ploughing up of lands, forcible cutting of crops, etc., is very great, and shows that much uncertainty exists among tenants themselves as to their actual rights and the boundaries of their holdings. The first step towards an improvement in this respect would be the abolition of those absurd and unintelligible papers known as Zamindāri Chithas, and the introduction of a proper system of Khasrah measurement. The Bengal ryot is not so lawless a character; and I believe it will be found in most cases of alleged criminal trespass that both parties were acting in good faith, each believing himself to be entitled to the land. If, however, holdings were properly measured and recorded, this would be impossible; and I do not see why the Legislature, which requires that a lease shall be given to the cultivator, should not also require that the lease shall contain a distinct specification of the lands to which it refers. Such a provision would be a benefit to both the tenant and the landlords.”

From the time of the Sanyāsies dacoities in the river districts have been a serious blot on the administration. In a letter of 16th December 1813, T. H. Ernest, Esq., wrote that the most stringent measures were employed to put a stop to dacoities. *Goyendahs* were empowered to take hundreds of people on suspicion and to hang scores of them by way of example without any form of trial. Considering the accessibility by water of Mymensingh traders' houses and shops, their unprotected nature, and the timidity of the peaceful population, it is strange that dacoities do not play a larger part in the criminal history of the last century. In 1905, two gangs which had committed over 60 dacoities with Badla and Madhupur as the centres of their activity were broken up. Cases of this nature, however, are not the burden on the administration that they are in Bihar.

In the year 1866 the Abroo Gāros of three villages, to whom the Susung Rājā with the idea of forcing them to pay rent had

closed all *hāts* and ordered all his ryots to refuse supplies, made raids across the boundary and committed many murders. Mr. C. G. Baker, V. C., the Deputy Inspector-General, and Mr. Reily, the Superintendent of Police, took out a force of 150 men and demanded the surrender of the guilty villagers. When this was refused and the police advanced, a stone shoot was released and Reily and several of his men were hurled down the *khud* and severely injured.

The first political case in the district was a sequel to the rioting at Jamālpur in 1907. The Superintendent of Police and the Subdivisional Officer were fired at from the temple in the Gauripur cutchery, where the Muhammadans were besieging the Hindu Volunteers who had interfered in the *mēlā*. The first political dacoity occurred in Police-station Bājītpur, when some youths of the *bhadralog* class gained admission into the house of a *tālukdār* by pretending to be police officers.

Political
cases.

In 1911, Sub-Inspector Rāj Kumār Ray of the Criminal Investigation Department was shot dead in the Mymensingh town. Five bullet holes were found in his back. Some smaller dacoities intervened, and then in 1913 over Rs. 9,000 was looted at Dhuldia and Rs. 18,000 at Kedarpur from the house of a Shāhā. In both cases villagers were killed. In August of the same year Inspector Pankim Chandra Chaudhury was killed by a bomb in his house in Mymensingh. The bomb was of the same type as those used in the Midnapore and Delhi cases. In the autumn of 1915 Deputy Superintendent Babu Jatindra Mohan Ghose was the victim with his child of a particularly brutal murder. In 1914-15 there were three more cases of dacoity with murder and at Chandrakona the whole bazār was held up and four men wounded with revolvers. The booty in this case was estimated at Rs. 21,000. Two informers have been shot near Bājītpur.

Revenue.

The receipts in the financial year 1914-15 amounted to about 28 lakhs, and the chief items are compared below with the collections under corresponding heads in 1821 and 1860 :—

		1914.	1860.	1821.
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Stamps	...	6,16,548	2,07,675	69,210
Land Revenue	...	8,65,135	12,79,780	11,76,240
Income-tax	...	1,30,631	3,765	...
Excise	...	7,33,108	2,67,675	76,965

The general revenue of the district, including local cesses, is

about treble what it was in 1795, although land revenue has gone back. Even in the last decade there has been an increase of 60 per cent. in Excise, 70 per cent. in judicial stamps, and 95 per cent. in non-judicial stamps.

Excise was the chief source of revenue of the Dacca Viceroy in Mughal times and in the early days of the Company, when a large part of the land revenue proper went on the upkeep of the fleet and the army. But in the mofussil it had very humble beginnings. Until 1808 there does not appear to have been any Abkari Mahal in Mymensingh, and in 1813 we find a staff of 4 darogas sanctioned for Abkari collections. In 1816 the revenue decreased as owing to floods people were able to afford less spirits.

In 1816 the Collector proposed to increase the number of opium shops as the price being high (Rs. 25 a seer) much illicit opium was used. The Board agreed to his suggestion that stamp vendors should sell opium on a commission of 2 or 2½ per cent.

Ganja, as in the neighbouring districts of Dacca and Tippera is largely consumed, and in 1900 accounted for no less than one-half of the excise revenue. The license fees on country spirit, which is all imported from Dacca, amount to a lakh, and the average consumption amounts to 2 gallons for every 1,000 persons. Imported liquors are used to some extent by the richer classes, and pachwai is a favourite drink of the aboriginal tribes.

The heavy stamp revenue is due to the love of the people for litigation, which is almost their only extravagance. The increase in non-judicial stamps is accounted for by the fact that kabuliyats have only recently come into favour and the great extent to which sales and mortgages of occupancy holdings take place in this district. In 1903 there were 21 Sub-Registry offices and now there are 35. In 1914 they registered 161,057 documents and as, apart from the stamp revenue, the total receipts were Rs. 1,94,335 and the expenditure Rs. 86,907, they are a great source of profit to Government.

Up to and including Akbar's time, the *Kotwāl* was responsible for the crime in his city, town or village. At that time in the words of Akbar's minister "if any article is stolen or robbed the police must return the article, produce the offender or failing this become responsible for the equivalent." The zamindārs were responsible for the policing of their territory and appointed the *Kotwāls*. It was found, however, that they used these officers not to maintain the public peace but to

Police.

plunder the people, and under British rule the Magistrates of districts gradually assumed control and appointed a number of darogas, who had under them barkandazes and village watchmen. Darogas were first appointed in 1833 and received their pay by commission, Rs. 10 for each dacoit convicted and 10 per cent. of the value of property recovered from a convicted thief. The darogas, however, soon assumed tremendous power and were as oppressive as the zamindārs had been. Various commissions were appointed to consider remedies, but nothing serious was done until effect was given to the resolutions of the Police Commission of 1860.

In 1862 the Magistrate, writing to the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, thinks that "the new plan of special officers is bound to succeed, as want of supervision due to the Magistrate's inability to find time for travelling was the main defect of the existing system, and the real source of most of the other evils, viz., bribery and corruption." He added that the salaries should be raised so as to attract a better class of men.

In this year the total cost of the police, excluding 49 guards for the Jail and 24 for the Treasury, was Rs. 27,624. By 1865 the staff had already been increased to 564 and the cost to Rs. 86,700.

In 1913 the regular police force of the district consisted of 103 Sub-Inspectors, 108 head constables and 854 constables. For supervision there was one Superintendent of Police, 1 Additional Superintendent, 2 Assistant Superintendents, 2 Deputy Superintendents, 13 Inspectors, of whom 7 were in charge of circles generally coterminous with the subdivisions, 3 in charge of Courts, 2 of political work and one of the armed branch. This works out at one policeman for every 5·7 square miles of area and 4,183 head of population. It includes the town police.

The cost was divided as follows :—

	Rs.
(a) Pay of Gazetted Officers ...	44,307
(b) Subordinate officers, including ministerial and hospital staff ...	1,23,508
(c) Head-constables and constables ...	1,22,094
(d) Clothing ...	6,828
(e) Contingencies ...	36,751

or a total of Rs. 3,33,488. There was an additional expenditure on buildings of Rs. 58,006.

The river police have thānās at Bhairab and Nikli and the Railway Police at Mymensingh, Singhjāni and Jagannathganj.

On the average about 13 constables belonging to these special branches are stationed in this district.

In addition there is an armed reserve of 244 constables and 25 head-constables under an Inspector and 7 Sub-Inspectors, which is almost entirely recruited from Pihar and the United Provinces.

Mymensingh seems to have been the first district in which chaukidars were organised, and Mr. Evers, the Collector, received the thanks of Government in 1817 and a copy of his report was sent to all other districts. The following extracts may be of interest :—

“I do not find in any former year that it was at all usual for any person to think of informing of a robbery except the prosecutor, and that he frequently delayed in going to the thānā for 10 or 15 days. In these instances, the apprehension of offenders was next to impossible. No chaukidars had been appointed in the villages, and though regulations had been passed by Government making the zamindārs and their agents responsible for the conveyance of immediate information, the punishment for neglect had never been awarded.”

“To remedy these evils, I caused landlords of all descriptions to be furnished with copies of those sections of the regulations which define their duties in aid of the police. By my direction, the landlords appointed chaukidārs in every village, whom I have not only found of great use in apprehending offenders, but also in giving information.” In 1817, the Sub-Inspector of Police reports “I conclude that the expenses of this establishment is in reality (as it ought to be) defrayed by the inhabitants of the villages, but as no regulation expressly directs the general appointment of the village watchmen, I have not thought proper to interfere with the assessment. I have had no complaints from the ryots and very seldom from the chaukidārs on account of wages. The salaries are from Re. 1 to Rs. 2-8 per mensem, but many have received grants of land in lieu of allowances in money, some have both.” This grant soon disappeared and by 1820 all chaukidārs were supported by their fellow villagers.

In 1838 the Police Commissioner criticised the dual control under which the system was bound to be a failure: “By a regulation of 1793, the police was under the exclusive charge of Government and all descriptions of village watchmen under the orders of the daroga. The zamindārs were responsible for apprehending criminals although deprived of all police powers and even of control over the chaukidārs. The zamindārs

unentrusted with authority but still held responsible, would of course afford no cordial co-operation. The chaukidārs required to serve two masters, nominated by and entitled to receive their pay from the one, but bound to obey, and liable to dismissal from, the other, would eventually serve neither, while the public authority is naturally hated and betrayed by both."

In 1866 McNiele reported on the rural police. The number in Mymensingh was 5,186 maintained by villagers, 26 maintained by Government, nil maintained by zamindārs.

In 1872 Reynolds writes that "this large force exists only on paper. The watchmen who are really employed, probably not one-fifth of the 5,580 nominally employed, are a very inefficient body, not seldom in league with the criminals whom it is their duty to apprehend. They are supposed to receive Rs. 4 a month each either in money or in land, but the salaries are as mythical as the men themselves."

Daffadārs most probably were first appointed in 1895, but this is uncertain. There are now 6,944 chaukidārs and 772 daffadārs in the district.

There are five jails in Mymensingh. The district jail was built for 635 prisoners, but the daily average in 1915 was more than 800. The subdivisional jails have room for from 22 to 47 persons. The convicts are chiefly employed on agriculture, including market gardening and jute growing, wheat grinding and the manufacture of mats, carpets, cane chairs and bricks.

Post Office.

There are few departments in which the British genius for administration has been more successful than in its organisation of a postal service, which covers the most inaccessible villages in this overgrown district. It is estimated that three million paid letters, 4 lakhs of unpaid letters and 5 lakhs of postcards are annually delivered in this district. Rs. 1,53,568 worth of postage stamps and Rs. 22,124 of stamped envelopes were sold in 1912-13. In addition the post offices carry out an enormous business in the popular money order service, V. P. P. system and saving banks. In 1914-15, Rs. 1,43,054 of revenue and cesses was paid in 34,172 money orders and Rs. 27,924 in 1,277 rent money orders. They are now taking up an ambitious programme of life insurance, which bids fair to be as popular as the other branches.

There are 307 Post Offices and branch Post Offices in the district. The post offices are chiefly mat and thatched huts, only Rs. 10,469 having been expended on building during the years 1909 to 1914. The Post Masters in the mofussil only receive Rs. 5 pay, and many of them are uneducated. The letters are

carried by up-country coolies in relays of 5—8 miles, and it is very seldom that losses or burglaries occur. Until recently the heavy mail to and from Tangail was carried through the Madhupur jungle at night, the journey of 60 miles only taking 18 to 20 hours, winter and summer.

Deputy Post Masters existed at the very beginning of the 19th century, but they were abolished by the Governor General in Council on the 11th October 1804, and Collectors with the official designation of Post Masters were placed in charge.

The actual management rested with the landlords, who appointed the *dāk* muharrirs and runners, and the Collector only interfered to punish instances of neglect of duty, and to enforce payment of the salaries of subordinates. By Act VIII of 1862, the Magistrate was vested with a more complete control. Funds were raised by the levy of a percentage upon all estates situated within the district, the Government revenue of which was Rs. 50 and upwards. The rate in the year 1865 amounted to 15 annas 5 pies per Rs. 100 of revenue. During the year 1863-64 the village chaukidārs were employed to deliver letters, but this plan was a failure and a regular staff of special peons was entertained from the beginning of 1865. By Government orders dated the 16th October 1865, the offices of *dāk-muharrirs* and pound-keepers were amalgamated, and the *dāk-muharrirs*, with a few exceptions, received half their salaries from the Pound fund, an arrangement which resulted in considerable economy. In the same year the supervision of the executive duties connected with the zamindāri *dāk* were made over to the District Superintendent of Police.

Later the management passed into the hands of the postal department and by Eastern Bengal and Assam order of the 4th April 1906, the zamindāri *dāk* cess was entirely abolished with effect from the 1st April of that year.

The increase of business is shown by the following table :—

		1865.		1912.	
		No.	Amount in rupees.	No.	Amount in rupees.
			Rs.		Rs.
Money issued.	orders	20	1,78,300	44,6668	74,05,470
Money paid.	orders	491	27,340	18,2841	32,74,287

These figures do not include Tangail. That sub-division is included in the Pābna Postal Division.

Telegrams. There are now 41 Telegraph offices open in the district, and in 1913-14, 107,743 telegrams were received and 115,670 issued at these offices. The postal and telegraph departments have been combined under the same management since 1914. The first telegraph line laid in the district was from Mymensingh to Dacca in 1883 and it was extended to Sherpur in 1885.

CHAPTER XII.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

THERE are no village communities in Bengal in a true sense, and the *chaukidāri panchayat* system recognised by Act VI of 1870 is a purely artificial organisation, the unit being unions and not villages. The system has the advantage that it allows a larger choice of capable *panchayats*. The defect has been that the *panchayats* are judged by the regular payment of the *chaukidāri* tax and treated merely as an agency to collect money. The Police Commission of 1904 recommended that the *panchayats* should be gradually converted into village headmen and criminal cases made over to them for disposal. The system was never tried in Mymensingh and in other places the mistake was made of not giving it the special supervision, which its framers said was essential. In Mymensingh therefore Local Government is confined to the District Board, Local Boards and Municipalities.

Before the Cess Act of 1880 a District Board Committee existed, apparently based on Act X of 1871, which derived a small income from the proceeds of pounds and ferries and advised the Collector as to the upkeep of the main roads, the cost of which had hitherto been entirely defrayed by Government. Both roads and the important ferries which connected them had been considered as public property under the Maghal Government, but, as the letter of the Collector in 1791 shows, all roads being only paths they had gradually come to be treated as private property and had afterwards to be formally acquired or made over to Government by the courtesy of the landlords. The Cess Act gave to the District Board Committee the expenditure of the roads' portion of the cess

and Government contributed Rs. 1,800 annually as its share of the cost of the collection. It took away the proceeds of important ferries at the same time. Under the same Act branch road committees were established in the four subdivisions to administer small grants for village roads. The District Committee consisted of 17 members.

The present District and Local Boards were constituted under Act III of 1885. It was originally intended that the Local Board, and not the District Board, should be the unit and that unions working under the supervision of the Local Board should manage primary schools, pounds, roads, tanks, drains and sanitation, and raise their own funds and elect their own members. The Secretary of State disliked the proposals and when the Bill eventually passed, the District Board had become the unit; Local Boards have no definite position and are dependent on the charity of the District Board.

A recent Government order has made over to the District Board the whole of the roads and public works cess amounting in 1912-13 to Rs. 5,42,738-4-9 instead of half only. In spite of certain Government contributions for special purposes being withdrawn on this account a considerable increase in the income has been the result. In the financial year 1913-14 the difference was Rs. 2,21,596. At present the difficulty is to spend the money as contractors are very bad and very slow in this district, the season for burning bricks is short, and even coolies for earthwork can hardly be obtained in sufficient number.

Probably in no district are the Local Boards so effete and their meetings so lifeless as in Mymensingh. Even for the District Board it is extraordinarily difficult to get members who really contribute to its usefulness. Most of the work is done by the Collector, who has always been the Chairman. Few of the members know enough about the district as a whole to question the distribution of funds for new works proposed by the District Engineer, and their interest is usually confined to their own portion of the district. To some extent it is the long list of official agenda of a routine nature which stifles the introduction of fresh matter by private members at the meetings. An hour or an hour and a half is about all that the members like to give to a meeting, and it is seldom sufficient for the Chairman to read out and explain the 20 to 60 items, for which as a rule the sanction of the Board is only a formal necessity.

The income and expenditure of the Board in 1887-88, the

first year in which a report was issued, and in 1910-11 is compared in the following table :—

Names of major heads.	1887-88.	Percent- age of total.	1910-11.	Percent- age of total.
INCOME.				
	Rs.		Rs.	
Government contribution	1,149	·37	1,53,452	28·2
(1) Road cess ...	2,58,616	84·20	2,59,422	47·7
(2) Pounds ...	42,579	13·87	41,928	7·7
(3) Education fees and contributions. }	572	·19	{ 12,529 }	2·4
(4) Medical and Minor departments. ...	...	...	2,592	·5
(5) Miscellaneous ...	3,904	1·27	18,520	3·4
(6) Ferries ...	314	·10	55,012	10·1
Total ...	3,07,134	100	5,44,380	100
EXPENDITURE.				
(1) Management and salaries.	23,889	12·69	66,550	12·51
(2) Education ...	39,796	21·13	1,47,991	27·82
(3) Hospitals and Sanitation (Medi- cal).	...	...	33,324	6·26
(4) Roads and Commu- nications.	1,24,610	66·18	2,39,185	44·96
(5) Water-supply ...	...	...	44,911	8·45
Total ...	1,88,295	100	5,31,961	100

It will be seen that schools, anyhow, have not proved the source of additional income anticipated by Sir Stewart Bayley in his first resolution on the working of the new District Board in 1888. The income of the largest ferries in the district giving a revenue in 1915 of Rs. 35,035 are still appropriated by the Local Government.

The District Board runs a very successful printing press of its own and spends a net sum of about Rs. 2,500 a year from its own funds on the Kashi Kishor Technical School. This school is supposed to teach the two trades of carpenter and blacksmith to the sons of poor gentlemen in the town, and it has lately been encouraged by large orders for boat fittings and school furniture from the Board. The actual work at present is chiefly done by hired skilled labour as the apprentice pupils are irregular in their attendance and deficient in application

With good supervision, however, the venture should do well. It was started in 1893. There is also a well built Veterinary Hospital at Mymensingh in which 1,645 animals were treated in 1913. The expenditure was Rs. 1,463 and the receipts Rs. 659. A weaving school was started at Tangail in 1912. The boys from the neighbourhood who have joined the class belong by birth to the weaving community and there are distinct hopes that the school may do something to revive the cloth manufacture that was at one time an important feature of the Tangail and Kishorganj subdivisions, but has now almost entirely died out.

The Local Boards have no income of their own apart from what is allowed by the District Board from its own resources. In 1912-13 the expenditure of each was as follows :—

		Roads.	Water-supply.	Management.	Total.
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Jamālpur	...	4,380	5,622	1,502	11,504
Tangail	...	6,054	8,455	1,461	15,970
Kishorganj	...	5,216	10,898	1,348	17,462
Netrakona	...	4,956	2,461	1,509	8,926
Sadar	...	7,571	3,995	1,647	13,213

The District Board has naturally been much handicapped by the size of the district and the large number of rivers and *bils*, which make an enormous number of bridges necessary. Except at ruinous cost it is impossible to make the waterways on most of the important roads sufficient with the result that in the rains the embankments are washed away and new breaks are always occurring. These breaks are a great nuisance even in the cold weather, for the water is insufficient to float a proper boat, and even over the big rivers, where boats to carry carts and horses are kept, the rivers fall and rise so quickly that it is difficult to maintain proper landing *ghāts*, and passengers may have to wade long distances through shallow water to reach the boats. The District Engineer has a most disheartening task in trying to overcome all these natural difficulties over such an extended area, and the bamboo bridges, which he puts up in the cold weather to help foot-passengers, never last long and are sometimes almost dangerous to life and limb.

Another difficulty is that there is no stone at all available

in the district and the *pukka* roads are made of brick. The surface quickly crumbles into a most obnoxious red dust, and they require complete relaying every two or three years. There are now about 54 miles of *pukka* roads in the district which cost Rs. 48,247 to maintain, so that out of 950 miles of road in the district maintained by the District Board these 54 cost 49 per cent. of the total sum available for maintenance.

The villagers have a bad habit of making small cuts in the road to release the water whenever it shows signs of flooding their own fields. In the rains and cold weather, when every field is covered with rice, jute, or mustard crops, the District Board roads often afford the only grazing available for cattle, and cows and goats are tied with long ropes along the sides at frequent intervals to the great danger of travellers riding or bicycling at any pace.

The District Board offices at head-quarters are substantial buildings. Government does not maintain any *dāk* bungalows in the mofassil even in the subdivisions, and the bungalows maintained by the Board compare very unfavourably as regards materials and fittings with those maintained by the Public Works Department in Assam. They are indispensable to all touring officers especially in the season when it is impossible to live in tents, or indeed to cart tents about. At present they number 26 and mostly consist of two rooms with mat walls and tin roofs, in some cases covered by thatch. Those at Kishor-ganj, Netrakona, Tangail and Gafargāon have *pukka* walls, and four new ones entirely *pukka* have recently been sanctioned. There is no doubt that the number could be increased with advantage.

Pounds are managed by the Local Boards. They number 355. The income in 1915 was Rs. 40,971 and the expenditure Rs. 4,285. Even from the start it appears that they were a popular institution, as the returns of 1866 show that nearly 60 animals were impounded daily throughout the year. April is the month in which the largest number of animals are impounded, and the number is smallest in August.

When Reynolds was Collector the town of Nasirābād was the only place in the district which possessed a Municipality. The inhabitants applied to Government in the year 1857, praying for the extension of Act XXVI of 1850 to the town. After the usual notices and proclamations, the Act was formally introduced in July 1858 and a Code of Rules for working the Act was framed and approved by Government. The Act at first did not work well, and in June 1859 a number of the

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tions.

inhabitants applied to Government to have it suspended. The main cause of dissatisfaction was the inequality of the assessment, and this was remedied by various rules passed at a meeting of the Commissioners on the 14th July 1859.

Funds were raised under the Act by the levy of the following taxes :—

1. A tax on houses and buildings at an average of two annas per month and not exceeding Rs. 2, the same being paid by the occupier. Public buildings, temples, etc., were exempted as well as empty houses.

2. A tax of two pice upon every loaded cart and of one pice upon every loaded bullock entering or leaving the town.

3. A tax of one anna upon every elephant entering or leaving the town, or of one anna daily upon every elephant kept within the town.

The house tax was assessed by a *panchāyat* of seven persons. The members were appointed by the Commissioner, but on the occurrence of a vacancy, it was usual for the remaining members of the *panchāyat* to fill up their numbers.

The following is the annual statement of the Municipal Fund for the year 1865-66 :—

<i>Receipts.</i>				<i>Expenditure.</i>			
		Rs.	A. P.			Rs.	A. P.
Balance in hand	...	191	2 5	Clearing drains and repairing			
House tax collections	...	1,317	2 9	station roads ...	...	928	10 0
Tax on carts	...	73	14 0	Keep of municipal bullocks			
Fine	...	0	12 0	and drivers' wages	...	231	5 6
Sale of municipal stores	...	51	12 0	Tax collector's commission	...	131	0 0
Received for hire of municipal carts	...	105	5 6	Pay of writer	...	60	0 0
Total	...	1,740	0 8	Pay of chaprasies	...	48	0 0
				Stationery	...	13	5 0
				Sundries	...	0	12 0
				Total	...	1,413	0 6

Subsequently the following municipalities were created :—

Name.	Year of establishment.	Area in square miles.	Number of elected Commissioners.	Number of nominated Commissioners.	POPULATION—	
					In 1881.	In 1911.
Jamālpur ...	1st April 1869	12.7	10	5	14,727	21,109
Sherpur ...	Ditto ...	9.5	8	4	8,821	15,591
Kishorganj ...	Ditto ...	6.0	10	5	12,984	18,026
Bājītpur ...	Ditto ...	2.0	6	3	4,641	10,823
Muktagacha ...	October 1875	1.0	6	3	4,295	6,555
Tangail ...	1st July 1887	5.25	10	5	15,348	16,362
Netrakona ...	1st January 1887.	12.17	All nominated.	...	...	13,740

The Nāsīrābād or Mymensingh Municipality has an area of 12·07 square miles and a population of 21,109 as opposed to 10,561 in 1881. In 1864 the population was only 4,295. It is the only Municipality which possesses artificial water-works. They were constructed by Māhārājā Surjya Kanta Acharjya Bāhādur at a cost of Rs. 1,42,278 in the year 1893. In 1900 the cost of maintenance amounted to Rs. 7,965-6-8. Elaborate schemes for drainage have been discussed recently for Jamāl-pur, Tangāil and Netrakona, but no Municipality has as yet initiated schemes for electric lighting, tramways or light railways.

The following table shows the total income and expenditure of each Municipality for 1912-13 as compared with 1880 :—

		1880.		1912.	
		Income.	Expendi- ture.	Income.	Expendi- ture.
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Jamālpur ...	...	5,536	4,932	17,051	13,704
Sherpur ...	...	6,683	6,577	11,524	12,161
Kishorganj ...	...	3,457	3,401	9,845	10,070
Bājītpur ...	...	1,273	1,314	5,911	4,888
Muktagacha ...	...	...	...	9,675	9,518
Tangāil ...	...	...	...	12,620	10,848
Netrakona ...	...	...	...	10,247	10,979
Mymensingh ...	...	11,813	9,497	70,405	69,471
Total	...	...	...	1,47,278	1,41,639

The main source of income in most municipalities is the tax on buildings and in others on persons. The main expenditure in all cases is on conservancy.

In most of the municipalities large areas which are purely agricultural have been brought into the municipal areas by the original notifications purely for the purpose of widening the basis of assessment. In Jamālpur, Sherpur and Netrakona this system has had the most grotesque results, and in Netrakona the boundaries have been revised recently, so as to exclude Revenue Survey units which formed no part of the town proper and were never likely to come into it in the normal course of expansion.

The municipal commissioners are more independent than the members of the District and Local Poards, having naturally

a much closer and more personal interest in the management. They are also directly interested in the amount and nature of their own assessment. In Sherpur and Muktagācha a member of the zamindāri families is usually the Chairman, and on the whole the administration compares favourably with that of the larger municipalities.

CHAPTER XIII.

EDUCATION.

CONSIDERING its size and general prosperity the district of Mymensingh is one of the most backward in education among the districts of Eastern Bengal. There has, however, been a considerable advance in English education in recent years. Before Government took up the question, education was imparted through *Maktabas*, *Madrassas* and *Tols*, but Mymensingh never contained any of sufficient renown to attract pupils from other districts. The *Madrassa* at Mangalbāria in Katiādi was perhaps an exception, as it used to be attended by some boys from Sylhet. The education characteristic of these indigenous schools is of very little real educational value, though some improvement has lately been brought about in the *Tols* by the help of Government examinations and *Pandit* Associations. The *Madrassa* system is also undergoing reform; Persian has been omitted from the curriculum and a certain amount of English and secular subjects introduced.

The *Maktabas* and *Madrassas* mostly owe their existence to the generosity of some well-to-do village *Mathbars* and are generally presided over by half educated Maulvis from Noākhāli or Chittagong, who not infrequently end by marrying in the family of their employers and settling down in the village. In these institutions the boys are taught to read the Koran and easy books in Urdu and Persian mostly of a religious character. There are no fixed fees, but the boys generally propitiate their Maulvis by paying whatever they can, varying from a pinch of tobacco or a pail of milk to 4 and 5 annas in cash. The Maulvi gets his beard and lodging free at the house of his chief employer and also supplements his means by presiding at village funerals and other religious ceremonials.

The Sanskrit *Tols* were generally situated in the house of the *Pandit*, and pupils from different villages used to come and live with him and board at his expense. The pupils used to receive their instruction free, but the *Pandits* received fixed stipends from well-to-do villagers and zamindars in cash or kind. They also derived a moderate profit from attending feasts and festivals with their pupils and *shamajik*, or honorarium, paid to the pupils by the hosts. The people as a rule

were very indulgent to the pupils of the *Tols* and allowed them to ransack the fruit and vegetables in their gardens. Although these primitive institutions were of little value from the modern educational point of view they satisfied the limited ambition of the people and were useful in their own way in teaching the boys to perform their religious observances. The acquisition of knowledge for its own sake was very rare owing to the dearth of a middle class gentry and an aristocracy of learning in the district. The founders of most of the notable families in Mymensingh were either military adventurers or Civil officers in Government employ, an aristocracy of wealth who paid little or no attention to education, with the result that unlike other districts under Muhammadan influence, wealth and not learning became the criterion of rank. Gradually, owing to the persistent efforts of the education department, education has made steady progress and a large number of schools under English-knowing masters have taken the place of the primitive *Maktabas* and *Tols*. In 1852 the control of education was transferred from the Board to a Special Council. In 1854 the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal made it known that Government intended to establish a system of vernacular schools for the rural population, and that people connected with schools who wanted assistance should make their wishes known to the Collector.

The first Middle English School in this district was started at Narāyandahar, a village in Pargana Susung, about 6 miles west of Netrakona, in January 1846, and in the month of November of that year the Hardinge School was established at Mymensingh. The Zillah School was established in the same town in November 1853, and this was followed by the establishment of the Janhabī school at Tangāil and the Donough school at Jamālpur. Within the next 20 years many schools sprang up on all sides with varying fortunes, and progress in education continued steadily.

In the year 1866-67 there were altogether 110 schools of all kinds with a total number of 3,984 pupils attending them. Of these 72 with 2,644 pupils were in East Mymensingh and 38 with 1,340 pupils in West Mymensingh. There was only one High School in that year with 284 boys on its roll.

In 1871 Sir George Campbell introduced his scheme for the improvement of primary education by which the District Board took over the financing and management of primary education in return for the income of pounds and ferries transferred to the District Board. In the course of the next 30 years

the progress in education was rapid, and the number of schools and pupils attending them increased twenty fold. In 1901 there were 2,129 schools of all grades with 59,628 pupils attending them. Of these 16 were Higher English schools with 4,797 pupils on their rolls. In that year there were two second grade Colleges in this district both teaching up to the F. A. standard of the Calcutta University with 190 pupils.

In 1914 the total number of schools had risen to 2,483 with 98,844 pupils. They are classified as follows :—

	Number.	Expenditure.	Pupils.	INCOME FROM—		
				Fees.	Grants.	Subscriptions, etc.
		Rs.		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Government ...	3	47,173	1,010	16,533	30,640	...
2. High schools (aided by Government).	12	1,14,535	5,130	98,378	10,605	6,522
3. High schools (unaided).	15	1,29,005	6,860	1,16,537	.....	12,270
4. Middle English schools.	138	2,10,118	18,710	1,72,682	12,886	24,550
5. Middle Vernacular schools.	33	15,896	2,076	8,100	5,940	1,855
6. Upper Primary schools.	127	34,962	7,068	14,477	18,267	1,718
7. Lower Primary schools.	2,492	2,40,256	80,288	1,07,006	1,27,833	5,417

Of these Primary schools 814 with an attendance of 16,863 are for girls. The Vidya Moyi Girls' School at Mymensingh was opened in 1865 and now contains 210 pupils.

Twelve Upper Primary schools and 2 Lower Primary schools are chiefly maintained for the benefit of the aboriginal tribes—the Gāros, Hadis, Hajangs and Māndāis. The first Gāro school was opened at Bāligāon in 1872, but the last census still returns all but 218 out of the 40,000 animists as illiterate. The Missionaries have been the chief agents in spreading education among the primitive people at the foot of the hills. The Baptist Mission maintains a first class hostel at Mymensingh from which Gāro boys from the Durgapur area can attend the Zilla School.

In spite of this development the Census of 1911 shows that only 4·6 per cent. of the total population of four and a half million are literate, 198,285 males and 11,869 females. The smallness of the percentage is due to the Muhammadans, only 2½ per cent. of whom are educated as opposed to over 10 per cent. of the Hindus. 23,373 males and 294 females are literate in English. Of the boys of school-going age only 25 per cent. attended school and of the girls barely 4 per cent. These figures compare very badly with Bakarganj and Dacca, where 8 per

cent. and 15 per cent. respectively of the total population have some education. In Faridpur the population is half that of Mymensingh, but the number of literate persons is almost the same. In Pabna, Rangpur and the Rajshahi districts the proportion is more like Mymensingh, one in 20 or 25.

The total expenditure on education in the district of Mymensingh in the year 1910-11 was Rs. 6,42,186, of which Rs. 69,676 was contributed from the general revenue and Rs. 1,42,832 from the District Board.

College
Education.

The first College in Mymensingh was the Pramatha-Monmatha College at Tangail. It taught up to the F. A. standard and was affiliated to the Calcutta University on the 27th December 1900. It only lasted ten years, but was of great service to the people of the Tangail subdivision which can now claim more graduates and under-graduates than the rest of the district. The recurring expenditure of the College amounted to about Rs. 7,000 a year and was entirely borne by the *zāmindārs* of Santosh who gave their name to the College. Finding more expenditure was necessary to its efficiency, the founders wisely agreed to its amalgamation with the Jagannath College, Dacca.

A year after the establishment of the Pramatha-Monmatha College, on the 18th July 1901 the City School in the town of Mymensingh was raised to the status of a second grade College as a branch of the City College at Calcutta and was affiliated to the Calcutta University in April of the following year. It was found, however, that the accommodation was insufficient to meet the increasing demands of the University Regulations, and the Calcutta Council resolved to close the College at Mymensingh and withdrew the affiliation with effect from 31st March 1908.

Babu Baikuntha Nath Chakrabarty, the Principal of the College, then sought the assistance of the Collector for reorganising the College and establishing it on a firm basis. A strong committee was formed and Government was approached for a liberal grant-in-aid. The Divisional Commissioner met the Committee in June 1908 with the result that the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam decided to contribute a sum of Rs. 55,000 towards the estimated capital expenditure of Rs. 80,000 for a new building provided the balance of Rs. 25,000 was raised by subscriptions. They also promised a recurring grant of Rs. 600. In a very short time Rs. 1,18,395 was promised, the chief subscribers being the *zāmindārs*, Raja Jagendra Kishor Roy Chaudhuri of Ramgopalpur, Māhārājā Kumar

Sashi Kanta Acharjya Chaudhuri, Rani Dinamani Chaudhuri and Babu Hem Chandra Chaudhuri. The College was reopened in 1908 and called the "Ananda Mohan College" after the late Mr. Ananda Mohan Bose of this district, a great educationalist and the founder of the City College.

In the year 1915 the total number of students on the rolls was 537, of whom 86 were Muhammadans. The total recurring expenditure was Rs. 42,759, of which Rs. 10,450 was the Government grant, Rs. 32,309 was realised in fees.

The history of English education in Eastern Bengal has been criticised at length in the report of the District Administration Committee published in 1914. It is certain that private English schools were allowed to multiply too quickly. While the funds at their disposal were not sufficient to provide suitable buildings and properly qualified teachers, the Committees of Management were not formed of men of large views and the University, which was supposed to control them, exercised its powers with little discrimination and thoroughness. The early choice of a career for his son does not appeal to the Bengali parent with the result that the scientific classes have had little patronage and the outturn of would-be Government officials and lawyers exceeds the demand, whereas the recruits to technical and engineering Colleges are too few.

There is still a sufficiency of employment for all persons properly educated especially in the Education Department where good teachers are urgently wanted, but for the partially educated Hindus of the *bhadrālok* class the prospects are increasingly gloomy. If the enormous profits on jute in the last decade failed to tempt them to take to cultivating their own lands, there is little opportunity now that the Muhammadans have acquired occupancy rights in most of the lands and their new born educational keenness is bringing them into the field as rivals in all departments.

As early as 1866 there was a printing press at Mymensingh which produced a weekly paper called the *Biggaponee*. The *Charu Mihir* at Mymensingh is the only periodical now published in the district. Some of the Sherpur and Kāgmāri *zāmindars* have produced literary works of some merit, but the district cannot boast of any well known authors and most of the works published at the numerous local presses are pamphlets and cheap handbooks of very passing interest and importance.

CHAPTER XIV.

GAZETTEER.

Adampur.—There is an *ākḥra*, or Vaishnavite monastery, supported by the contributions of the Kaibarttas. There is another at Dilli-ākḥra, in a fair-sized wood of hijal trees not far from Bithangal, which was founded by Narāyan Gosāin, a member of the Jagomohini sect.

Alapsingh.—Alāpshāhi was one of the 22 parganas which Isā Khān received at the hands of Akbar the Great after the battle of Mughalmāri. It consists of two parts, viz., Tappe Sātsikkā lying on the north of the Brāhmaputra and having the same local unit of measurement as the Sherpur pargana and Tappe Kumaria, where the unit is the pura, comprising most of Fulbaria, Muktagācha and Mymensingh thānās south of the river. At Todar Mal's settlement, the revenue was Rs. 1,90,161. At the Permanent Settlement it was fixed at Rs. 65,393, the depredations of wild elephants, which had caused an intermediate reduction in the time of Warren Hastings, having by this time become less severe.

• The Jangalbāri family soon lost the majority of Isā Khān's possessions. Alāpshāhi and Momin Shāhi fell to the share of Mahamad Mendi of Tikara in Atia. In 1721 Alāpsingh was in the hands of two Hindu families, Binod Rām Chandra of Lükia in pargana Barabāzu having 10 annas and the Rays of Puthijāni 6 annas. They allowed the revenue to fall in arrears and eventually resigned in the fear of further personal indignities at the hands of Murshid Kulī Khān, Nawāb of Murshidābād. This prince died shortly afterwards, and Srī Krishna Acharjya, the founder of the present family of the Muktagacha zamindārs, got a grant of the zamindāri from Alivardi Khan in 1727 in return for military assistance against his brother. Srī Krishna traced his descent from Udayrām Acharjya, a prominent Barendra Brahman. He had already obtained settlement of Taraf Jhakar in the Sailbāsha pargana of Bogra from Murshid Kulī Khān on the death of the proprietress, whose interests he had represented at the Nawāb's Court against a fraudulent ijāradar, Kumar Singh. His new

zamindāri was obtained on easy terms as he bribed the Nawāb's Kanungo, Ganga Rām Ray, to make a false report of its resources in return for a tāluk in the four best mahāls of the pargana. The khārija tāluks of the Tarash family in Bailar and Kalibazāil are the results of this bargain.

Srī Krishna had four sons who transferred their headquarters from Bogra to Bahādurpur and afterwards to Muktagācha, about 1750. Tradition says that a smith of the place named Muktarām presented Rām Rām with a brass *gachha* or lamp-stand as his *nazar*, and that Rām Rām recognised the gift by naming the town Muktarām's *gachha*. Even before this Rām Rām, the eldest brother, had his 4 annas share separate. It is still known as the Sābek Chāriani, but is divided into three parts, the *bara hissa*, *madhyam hissa* and *chota hissa*, after his three sons. The third brother Bishnu Rām was the next to leave the *ijmāli bāri*. His share is now divided into three parts, Sridhar Bābu's taraf, Purba Chota taraf and Uttar Chota taraf.

The other shares have not suffered from subdivisions and are now the most important and wealthy. Rājā Jagat Kishor Achārjya has the whole of the second brother's share, and because he has remained in possession of the original *ijmāli bāri*, tauzi No. 7, is popularly known as the *Atani bāri*. The late Māhārāja Surjya Kanta Acharjya and his adopted son Sasi Kanta Acharjya are the representatives of the youngest brother's 4 annas, and this estate, thanks to the energy, enterprise, and careful supervision of the late Māhārāja, is now the biggest in the district. It goes by the name of the Dari Chāriāni. The Mymensingh Water-works were erected by the Māhārāja in memory of his wife, Rāj Rājeshwari Debi; he also built the Town Hall and an iron bridge over the river Sutia. His estate was under the Court of Wards for three years, and after Surjya Kanta obtained his majority in 1867, his rise was rapid. He bought lands in Sherpur and Susung parganas and in Dacca, Mālda, Farīdpur, Murshidābād, Bogra and Pābna. He was made a Rāj Bāhādur in 1877, a Rājā in 1880, and a Māhārāja in 1897 at the time of the Diamond Jubilee. Surjya Kanta's adopted son Sasi Kumar Achārjya is the son of Rājā Jagat Kishor Acharjya. He is the only member of the Alāpsingh family who has been to England. He was made a Rājā Bāhādur in 1914. Rājā Jagat Kishor got his title in 1913.

Astagram—Is the most densely populated portion of Mymensingh, containing the homesteads of the cultivators of

some eight or ten revenue survey villages. There are Muham-madan *tālukdārs* of importance and any number of petty rent-free proprietors. Some are held by the priests of the Kaibartas, who form the majority of the fisherman class of the watery area. Bāngālpārā, the steamer *ghāt*, is 2 miles away, but the Dhaleswari which runs past Astagrām is the old channel of the Meghna and is navigable by launches throughout the year. Bangalpārā is the centre of the pearl fishery, which has attained some importance owing to recent lucky finds. There is a tomb of Kutub and a mosque called after him. Embanked roads to Dighipār and Bangalpārā were made by local people during the scarcity due to the floods of 1915.

Atia—This pargana does not appear in the *Ain-i-Ak-bari*. Saiyid Khān Pani was the founder of the Karatia family, and it was he who got this pargana as a jāgir from the Emperor Akbār. Up to Khodā Newāj Khān, the sixth in descent from Saiyid Khān, the Pāni family enjoyed the whole of the pargana. The first division into equal parts came with the two sons of Mānim Khān, Khodā Newāz and Maldar Khān. In 1787 the *bara* 8 annas was settled with Alāp Khān, and the other children of Khodā Newāj Khān, and the other 8 annas with Aliar Khān, son of Maldar Khān.

The property is now divided among many families. Only 2 annas 17 gandas of the pargana by inheritance now remains in the hands of the Pāni family, the rest of Tausi No. 10, which was Alap Khān's share, having been given to the Nawāb of Dacca in 1856 as a reward for helping Sādat Ali in a civil suit against his step-mother who had dispossessed him of his whole share. Only a certain number of villages, including Gorāi, where the family then lived, was left out of the partition. Sādat Ali then moved to Karatia. Wāzed Ali Khān Pani *alias* Chand Miya now enjoys 5 annas 19 gandas 0 karas 2 krantis, and his cousins, who are under the Court of Wards, 3 annas 3 karas 1 kranti as opposed to the Nawab's 7 annas, counting the original pargana share of 5 annas 1 ganda 1 kara 1 kranti as 16 annas.

The remainder of the *Bara Atani* (2 annas 18 gandas 2 karas 2 krantis) was divided into Tausis Nos. 11, 12, 16 and 5151 to 5153. Pejali Chaudhuri of Dhanbāri came in by marriage, and his grandson the Nawāb Saiyid Nawāb Ali Chaudhuri has added to this share by purchase. The Duajāni Mazumdārs and Baliati Shaha Chaudhuries and the Nawāb of Pogra also came in by purchase.

The *chota* 8 annas is divided into Tausis Nos. 9 and 5031 to

5035. The Nawāb of Dacca bought the 4 annas share of Aliar's two daughters, Tauzis Nos. 5031 and 5032, on the strength of a mortgage bond for Rs. 40,000 in 1806. The remaining 4 annas belonged to Roshna Khatun. There are many co-sharers in Tauzi No. 9, known as the Pakulla Chaudhuries, who are chiefly the linear descendants of Aliar Khān. They include the Ghaznavis brothers who now live at Dilduar. The remaining 1 anna 10 gandas share has been sold to the Lahiris of Kālipur, the Sen Chaudhuries of Gauhātā and the same Shāha Chaudhuries of Baliati, who possess a portion of Tauzi No. 12.

Bajitpur—Is the only municipality in the east of the district. It does not seem to have any natural advantages to account for its population of 12,000 persons. It is 2 miles from the Ghorāutrā river and has no water connection in the cold weather. The roads from Dilālpur and Katiādi are both unbridged. Huge stretches of swamp come close up to the town on all sides, the most dreary and unpromising being that on the north. Even inside the municipal limits communications are made difficult by *khāls*, which are never free of treacherous oozing mud. In the rains the Munsiff's Court and dispensary can only be reached by boat. There is a very poor Board bungalow facing a strip of *bil* on the south.

Bājitpur was famous in the old days for its muslin manufactures and the East India Company had a factory here: details of the industry, which survives, will be found in Chapter VIII.

Bhairab Bazar—Is finely situated on a commanding bank of the Meghna just north of the point where the old Brahmaputra flows into it. The railway bridge over this river has just been opened, and the wagon ferry to Asuganj in the Tippera district transferred from Daulatkandi to Bhairab. Bhairab has long been one of the biggest jute and trade centres in the district, and its importance will increase rapidly when the railway to Mymensingh and Netrakona is opened. Unfortunately the high land available for extension is limited.

Datta Bazar—Is an important and picturesque *hāt* on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra in Gafargāon thānā. It is said to be exceptionally healthy, and the river here is particularly deep and powerful. A road runs to Moshakhāli station 6 miles distant. As there is no ferry over the river it crosses 5 miles from the station, the road from Gafargāon is more convenient. The place is notorious for thieves.

Dewanganj—Is thus described by Buchanan Hamilton. "It may contain 100 houses and for Bengal is a neat well built place. It has in the centre an open area where the market is held. The area is generally planted with elegant trees of the fig kind." It does not seem to have developed much and Bakshiganj is now a serious rival. There is another busy *hāt* of the same name on the Brahmaputra opposite Gafargāon.

Dilduar—About 7 miles south-east of Tangāil, has a fine site and some not unimposing buildings. It is the home of Mr. A. K. Ghaznavi, a Member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council since 1909, and of Maulvi Saiyid Ahmed Hossein Chaudhuri. There is a mosque supported from *waqf* property, a dispensary, and a Middle English School.

Durgapur—Has some historical interest as the home of the Susung Rāj. It is pleasantly situated on the northern bank of the Someswari river. The bed of this river is wide and sandy, and there is not sufficient water for a proper ferry boat in the cold weather. Wading without a guide is dangerous, as in some places quick sands occur. There is a dispensary, District Board bungalow, and *thānā*.

Elashin—On the Dhaleswari, south of Tangāil, is an important jute centre, where there are usually some Europeans in residence. There is a steamer connection which runs most of the year between Dacca and Dhaleswari junction.

Gafargaon—Is important for its monthly *hāt*, where many cattle and horses change hands.

Gog-Bazar—Is the port of Kendua, which in itself is only important for its *thānā*, school, dispensary and bungalow.

Gopalpur—The headquarters of this thana, being half-way between Tangāil and Jamālpur, has been suggested as the headquarters of the new western district, but there is very little high land in the neighbourhood, and, unless a new railway passes quite close, the communications are very bad.

Hiluchia—Is an important jute centre. The *bazār* on a high mound is protected from the inroads of a *khāl* by some solid brick embutments. It is the market for many prosperous villages in this part of Bājītpur.

Hosenpur—Was the headquarters of the Khaje Kaprael *tāluk*, which comprises a large portion of Hosenshāhi pargana. There are some old ruins in the *bazār* and it is now an important jute centre.

Hosenshahi Pargana.—Originally part of the Nator Raj this pargana was purchased at a sale for arrears of revenue by

a Mr. Aratoon in 1790. Two daughters and relations called Holme and Stevens each succeeded to four-anna shares in 1822. All the shares were gradually sold to the Chakrabarty family of lawyers in Gangatia or settled in *patni* with the indigo planters, Wise, Carnegie and Kalanos. In 1853 Babu Sambhu Chandra Ray purchased the whole share of Agina Aratoon, and his son Mohim Ray, who settled at Atharabāri, bought more and more shares with the result that his widow Gyanada Sundari now controls 8 annas 18 gandas 1 kara and 1 kranti of the Pargana in zamindāri right and 3 annas 15 gandas in *patni*. With the 1 anna 6 gandas 2 karas 2 kranti share bought by Gyanada Sundari herself, this gives Atharabāri 14 annas as opposed to the two annas of Babu Atul Chandra Chakrabarty of Gangatia and other petty co-sharers.

Itna—Is the home of the Dewāns, who are connected with the ancient Muhammadan family who used to possess the rich Joānshāhi pargana. From very ancient times until the passenger steamer service up and down the Dhanu ceased, it was a place of some importance. The *math* is finely situated and there are several old tombs and a mosque.

Jagannāthganj—Is a steamer station and the terminus of the original Eastern Bengal State Railway through the district. The flat used to have a refreshment room, but this was discontinued when the Railway ferry between Teesta Mukh and Bahādurābād was opened. Passengers to Tangāil and Serājganj must therefore make their own catering arrangements. The permanent *ghāt* is only 2 miles from Sārisābāri, but in the cold weather it is sometimes 5 or 6 miles south.

Jamālpur—Is the headquarters town of the Jamālpur subdivision and has often been proposed as the headquarters station of a new district. It is built on a hard red clay, which is a continuation of the Madhupur jungle, so the river does not cut at all, and the sites of the Subdivisional Officer's bungalow, the Munsiff's Court, the thānā, and the dispensary, are all exceptionally high and cool.

The Jināi connects with the Brahmaputra about a mile above the Criminal Courts, so that the Municipality, which covers 12 square miles, is practically a peninsula. The Railway station Singhjāni is 2 miles distant from the courts, and is now the junction of the Bahādurābād and Jagannāthganj sections of the Eastern Bengal State Railway.

From 1823 to 1857 Jamālpur was a cantonment, and there are several graves of Military Officers and their families in the cemetery. The magazine, which has long been converted into

a jail, is a good specimen of solid masonry. As the centre of the Sanyāsi rebellion Jamālpur was known as Sanyāsiganj, when in 1845 it became the first subdivision of Mymensingh.

The large Khās Mahāl which was acquired for the cantonments includes a fine grove of mangoes, which makes a splendid centre for the large *mēlā* for which Jamālpur is chiefly noted. This *mēlā* has considerable historical interest. From 1909 to 1914 it made an annual profit of from Rs. 7,000 to 10,460, about half of which is distributed to local institutions like the Donough High School.

There is an accumulated fund of Rs. 16,370 which is deposited in the Jamālpur Central Bank and is the main source from which that Bank has been able to finance a large number of Co-operative unlimited liability banks in the Mādarganj and Jamālpur and Sherpur thānās.

The *mēlā* was started in 1883 by the Subdivisional Officer, Nunda Krishna Bose. He got the idea from a similar *mēlā* started at Chandan Baisa in the Bogra district by the Sub-Manager of the Dīghapatia Rāj. A committee of 14 members in addition to the Subdivisional Officer as president was formed, of whom 8 were zamindārs and pleaders, and six officials. They were all life members with power to fill up vacancies. Subscriptions amounting to Rs. 3,153 were raised, chiefly from the Sherpur zamindārs. In the first year ordinary shopkeepers were attracted, but in the next the cattle dealers who have been the main stay of the fair stopped at Jamālpur on their way to Dacca to test the market. All the cart bullocks and many of the plough bullocks in this and the Dacca district are brought across the Jamuna from Bihar at a ferry south of Dewānganj, and the fine trees on the *Khās Mahāl* of the old cantonments at Jamālpur formed a natural halting place. The big grassy chars north of the town provided cheap fodder, and the place was found a good centre for distribution, northwards towards the Gāro Hills, and southwards to Tangail.

In 1884 the tolls on cattle were vainly offered on *ijārā* at Rs. 25. At the end of the season the Committee found they had made a profit of Rs. 100 on cattle alone. In 1909 the profits from cattle on the basis of a 10-anna fee per head sold amounted to Rs. 9,345.

In 1885 Mr. Glazier, the Collector of the district, objected to the amount of money spent on religious ceremonies and miscellaneous entertainments. The people of the town began to be afraid that Government was going to take the *mēlā* out of their hands, and it does appear that Mr. Glazier did not like

the anomaly of a public institution, which was only indirectly under official control. An excuse for a general agitation was found in the fact that Mr. Glazier had had an image of *Kālī* removed from the *mēlā* ground and a rival Committee was formed, including four of the original members. They deposed the Subdivisional Officer from the presidentship, and asked him to make over the funds and papers. When the Collector vetoed this, they borrowed Rs. 500 from the Municipality and started a rival *mēlā* at Khātiakuri, 2 miles away. A crop of criminal cases was the result, each *mēlā* accusing the other of bringing in cattle dealers and fishermen by force. The High Court quashed some cases and Government called for a report from the Commissioner. As a result the Collector was censured for interfering with the doings of an independent body. In 1887 the *mēlā* took place on the original site and rules were framed by Mr. Dutt, District Magistrate, in which the principle of life membership was maintained, but the Subdivisional Officer was ex-officio President.

In 1907 the *swādeshi* volunteers marched in column to the *mēlā* on the excuse of defending the Hindu patrons from the Muhammadan rowdies, and this action led to the famous Jamālpur riots, as the result of which the temple in the Gauripur catcherry was besieged by a Muhammadan crowd and the Subdivisional Officer and Superintendent of Police were fired at.

The *mēlā* opens in January and goes on into April.

Jamurki—Is the head quarters of the Atia zamindāri in Mymensingh, where the Nawāb of Dacca's assistant manager resides. Pākulla, which adjoins Jamurki, is the home of another branch of the Atia family. It was an important place in Rennell's time.

Joanshahi.—The founder of the original Dewān family of Joānshāhi pargana was a Muhammadan convert from the Kastail Dutt family, who took the name of Manawar, popularly Manohar Khān. Other accounts say that he was a descendant of Fateh Khān, who got possession of this once *sair jalkar* mahal at the death of his master Isā Khān. Though not mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, it was one of the parganas settled with Isā Khān, and Manohar Khān and Nur Haidar Chaudhuri may merely have got resettlement as descendants of Fateh Khān in 1787. On Manohar's death a 2 annas share was carved out of the estate for his daughter Latifa Bibi. This portion, known as Tappe Latifpur with Tauzi No. 75, is now possessed by Dinesh Babu of Dhankura. The remaining

14 annas was treated as a 16 annas estate, of which 8 annas 14½ gandas was taken by Manohar's heirs and 7 annas 5½ gandas by the descendants of Haidar Chaudhuri. The mahāl had to provide 20 barges to the Mughal navy, and the names Doshkoshā and Naukoshā, by which the two shares have always been described, came from the apportionment between the shares of 10½ and 9½ barges, respectively.

The Doshkoshā Dewāns removed to Itna, while the Naukoshā family remained at Haulibāri near Astagrām. Both zamindāries fell in arrears, and Kāli Prasād Munshi bought Tanzi No. 70. It passed through the hands of several Europeans, till in 1282 (B.S.) 8 annas was bought by the Nawāb of Dacca, 2 annas 17 gandās 2 krāntis by Māhārāja Surjyā Kanta and 3 annas 2 gandās and 2 krāntis by Hem Chandra Chaudhuri of Pukhuria. Three lakhs was the price paid by the Nawāb for his 8 annas share. The Naukoshā (Tanzi No. 4805) after undergoing several transfers was the sole property of one Chand Bibi from 1821-1835. In 1836 it was purchased by the Collector for Rs. 23,000 and resettled for the most part with the Shikmi tālukdārs, who had been paying rent to the original proprietors, as 200 or more independent khārijā tāluks.

The original partition between Tazis Nos. 70 and 4805 had not been complete, many villages and parts of villages were still joint. The shikmi tāluks mostly consisted of compact blocks in separate villages, hence it is now difficult to trace the history of the *ijmāli* and *lakherāj* lands and to find out under which of the estates, which came out of 4,805, they are now held.

The present Dewāns of Itna have no share in any zamindāri and are only distant connections of the main line of the Doshkoshā family. The last of that line was Dewān Muhammad Afsar, who died in 1309 (B.S.) The descendants of the younger branch removed to Adampur and then to Ghāgra.

Karatia—6 miles, east of Tangāil, is the home of the original proprietors of the Atia pargana. It is situated on the Putiajāni river, which is merely a bed of sand in the cold weather. Mr. Wāzed Ali Khān Pani, the representative of the elder branch or *Bara Taraf* has rich zamindāries in the Kishorganj subdivision as well as in Atia, and the *Chhota Taraf*, now under the Court of Wards, is also a valuable estate. There are two bazārs, the larger of which known as the Mamudganj bazār is of some importance.

Karimganj—is a large jute centre, 7 miles east of Kishorganj, connected by a good road.

Katiadi—is a prosperous bazar on the Brāhmaputra. There are some good shops, and it is better served by roads than any other place in the district.

Kagmari.—Pargana Kāgmāri is not mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, but occurs in the *Jamal Kamal Sumari* of Nawāb Murshid Kuli Khān. During the reign of the Emperor Shāh-jāhān, a Pir, Shāhojmān by name, was master of this pargana. Jādobendra Ray of Bakla, a follower of Shāhojmān, succeeded him. After Jādobendra, his nephew Indranarāyan Ray inherited the property. Indranarāyan having renounced his religion, his nephew Biswanāth Chaudhuri took over the whole pargana. After Biswanāth's death his three sons had the zamindāri partitioned amongst themselves. The eldest got 6 annas and the younger sons 5 annas each. Rāni Dinomani Chaudhurani is the present proprietress of the 6 annas share, Tauzi No. 45, and Babu Pramatha Nāth Ray Chaudhuri and Rājā Manmatha Nāth Ray Chaudhuri are proprietors of the 5 annas share, Tauzi No. 46. Rāmeswar Ray, the second son of Biswanāth, had no sons, but left a daughter Sibāni, and his share, called the Bara Panchāni, is now divided into many tauzis. The descendants of Sibāni are known as the Alwa zamindārs.

Khaliajuri—is a typical village of the eastern river area. It has no commercial importance but was the earliest settlement of *bhadralok* in the eastern thānās. Some of the descendants of the original proprietors of the Khaliajuri pargana still live here in reduced circumstances. When the Governor on a recent visit for duckshooting gave a grant towards a new dispensary the cost of raising sufficient earth for a site was found nearly prohibitive.

Khaliajuri Pargana.—The old name was Bhāti and it consisted entirely of jalkar mahāls. A sanyāsi named Jitāri is credited with having rescued this pargana from Kāmrup, and in the 18th century it was the property of the Hom Chaudhuries, who lived largely by piracy. Murshid Kuli Khān was preparing to send a regiment to subdue the outlaws, when Lambodar, one of the two zamindārs, thought it prudent to go to the Murshidābād court to appease him. The pargana was again settled with the Hom family on condition that Lambodar turned Muhammadan, while his brother Dāmodar remained in the old faith. The two branches, Hindu and Muhammadan, still live at Khaliajuri, but their estates have dwindled to nothing, and they have no interest in the original Khaliajuri zamindāri, Tauzi No. 74. In 1204 (B.S.) half of it

tauzi was sold by the Chaudhuries to Mr. Wallis and the remaining half to the Rays of Dhankora in 1215 (B.S.). These landlords also bought the share of one of the two daughters of Mr. Wallis, while the Karatia zamindārs became the possessors of the remaining 4 annas share.

The Mahant of the Raghab Das math at Puri owns a part of the pargana with a cutcherry at Mirga under a separate Tauzi No. 56. The partition was made in Mughal times, and the estate was alienated by one of the Hom Chaudhuries to an agent of the Nawāb, born at Dacca, who, dying childless, left it to the Puri Mahant by will.

Kishorganj—Is the head-quarters town of the Kishorganj subdivision. The Nursunda river, which runs from Nandāil and Nilganj to the Brāhmaputra through Char Kāonā south of Hosēnpur, here opens out into a wide and deep basin, but south of Kishorganj it is only navigable even for small boats for a few months in the year, and the chief exit for jute is the broad road, half of which is *pukkā*, to Hosēnpur.

The Haibatnagar zamindārs used to have some fine houses in the town, but they have fallen into disrepair. The magnificent temple of Laksmi Narāyan was shattered in the earthquake.

The town was formerly noted for its maslin manufactures and the East India Company had a factory here as well as in Bājitpur. During the *Jhulan Jātrā* (August-September) a big *mēlā* is attended by traders from many outside districts.

• **Madanpur**.—(Netrokona). Madanpur is associated with a Muhammadan saint named Shāh Sultān who came from Turkey and settled at the site now known as the Darga-Madan, the Koch king of the village, tried to poison him, but being convinced of his saintly character accepted Islām and settled the whole village on Shāh Sultān and his disciples in perpetuity.

In 1829 A. D. the Government tried to resume this lakherāj but on the strength of a document dated 1082 A. Hizira released it in favour of the Jagirdār Saiyid Jalaluddin Muhammad. It appears from that document that Shāh Muhammad Sultān Rumi and his preceptor Saiyid Shah Surkh Khul Antia settled in this village with their disciples called *khadems* in 445 A. H. The present generation of the villagers claim their descent from those 10 *khadems*, and these 10 principal houses enjoy the income derived from the offerings to the shrine by rotation and consequently their year consists of 10 months. These families now have so many members that

some of them enjoy the income for a few hours of one day only.

The administration of the property is invested in a council of elders consisting of 10 leading men of the original families. There is a custom that the members who get the income of the day are bound to feed as many guests as may come on that day. At night a big drum is beaten by the guard of the shrine, the number of strokes exceeding by one the number of guests awaiting entertainment. In order to keep the profits of the shrine intact within the community, daughters are never married outside the village.

Madhupur.—This village is marked in Rennell's map and at one time gave its name to the Thānā of Gopalpur. There is an ancient Hindu temple of Madan Gopal Bigraha belonging to Rāni Hemanta Kumari Debi of Putia. An estate with an income of about Rs. 7,000 has been set apart for the maintenance of this temple, where about 60 guests are fed daily. About 1787 it was the head quarters of one of the Sanyāsi gangs under Rup Gir Sanyāsi. The ruins of important buildings, which were in good condition until the last earthquake, are still in existence. The Sanyāsis also had buildings in Boāli, an adjacent village. The zamindārs of the time were terrorised into granting many rent-free lands for the maintenance of temples of Sīva and the descendants of the Sanyāsis are still in possession.

Mohanganj.—On the Kangsha is the largest trading centre in the east of the district, having a considerable trade with Sylhet. A bazār sits twice daily and on Wednesdays the *hāt* is thronged with people from 6 A.M. to 11 P.M. and a fleet of 400 boats of all sizes may be counted on the river. The total attendance has been reckoned at 30,000. Ghee, fowls, oranges and fish are wonderfully cheap and plentiful. The country people buy with a seer of 60 tolas and sell their own produce with one of 90 or 84 tolas. The *nazar* paid for a hut in the bazār is Rs. 700.

There is a proposal to tap the resources of this neighbourhood by extending the new Mymensingh-Netrakona line to Mohanganj. At present all the exports, worth 12 lakhs at the lowest computation, go down the Dhanu river by country boat.

Mriga.—Is situated in the centre of an enormous *hāor* or *bīl* on the edge of an open lake and the *puikka* buildings can be seen from miles away. It is the catcherry of the Mahant of Puri, who has retained a considerable share of the Khaliājuri Pargana.

Muktagacha—Is a Municipality, owing its importance to its being the home of the proprietors of Alāpsingh Pargana. It is not situated on any river and has no natural facilities for trade. The zamindārs' houses are interspersed with numerous unhealthy tanks and insanitary quarters. It is typical of the Mymensingh landlords, that they allow the prostitutes' quarters to occupy the centre of the town right in the face of their Zenana windows.

Mymensingh Town—Still called Nāsirabād by the Muhamadans of the adjoining villages, owes its commercial importance to its being the headquarters of the district and its railway facilities. The Brāhmaputra is only navigable by large country boats during the rains. Mr. Wroughton selected the site in 1793 on account of the width of the high land and the civil station is built on Tāluk Bayard which was acquired by the Collector of that name. There is a race course with a circuit of 1½ miles and the bungalows inside it are on sites originally leased on nominal terms to various Europeans for building houses. The Alāpsingh and Mymensingh landlords who acquired these interests now make a handsome profit by letting the houses to the district officials. The Collector's house was built in 1808, and there is a church and a cemetery.

As early as 1811 Mymensingh was classed as a town and under the orders of the Board the Collector assessed a tax of Rs. 1,743 on 2,086 houses. In 1823 the Collector again writes that, the collection of "even Rs. 400 in town duties would be of infinite benefit in making roads, bridges and draining."

The water-supply is derived from the Brahmaputra. The Rajā Bāhādur has a palace built at a cost of 7 lakhs in 1910.

Mymensingh and Jafarshahi.—More is known of the earlier history of these parganas than of most of the others in the district. When the ancient kingdom of Kāmrup began to be dismembered in the 15th century, the Rājās of Gaur amalgamated Jafarshāhi and other portions of Mymensingh west of the Brāhmaputra with their kingdom, while a Koch chieftain named Bokai made Pokāinagar his head-quarters. The remains of this fortress make a picturesque camping ground just east of Bhawānipur. About 1495 Husain Shāh, King of Gaur, subjugated the whole district, and placed his son Nasrat Shāh in charge; from this chieftain the old name of Nasirabād is derived, the modern name Mymensingh comes from Momin Shah, one of his lieutenants. In 1582, when the Mughals overthrew the Pathan dynasty of Gaur, Raja Todār

Mal made an elaborate rent-roll known as the Wasil Tumar Jama, by which the Mymensingh pargana was included in Sarkar Iāzuha, and the Jafarshāhi pargana in Sarkar Ghoraghat. Both parganas were amongst the 22 granted by the Emperor Akbar to Isā Khān of Khizirpur, but neither was retained by his family after his death.

Early in the seventeenth century Mymensingh was held by one Muhammad Mendi of Tikara in Atia. During an invasion by the King of Assam in 1637 many villages were desolated, and the family was unable to pay the revenue, whereupon in 1657, the Nawāb Shāh Shujā resettled it with the Datta family of Mangalsidhi. Shortly after this one-sixth passed to the Nandi family of Rampur in Netrakona as a marriage dowry. Quarrels between the co-sharers led to the revenue again falling in arrears, and Murshid Kuli Khān authorized the local *Wadadar*, Mirza Muhammad Fehar Beg, to confine five of the proprietors. Three of these succumbed to torture, and the two others gave up the estate, taking a lakherāj property of 25 puras for their maintenance. The *sanad* dated 1116 (B.S.) of Muhammad Beg, confirmed by Sri Krishna Chaudhuri in 1143 (B.S.), was recognised as valid in the resumption proceedings instituted by Mr. J. A. Yule in 1843, and by virtue of this agreement the two families of Dattas and Nandis still possess some acres.

Sri Krishna Chaudhuri, the founder of the line of the present zamindārs of Mymensingh, was chosen as zamindār by the Nawāb, in return for his services as a kanungo. Like the Nātor Rāj family, he traced his descent from the Brahman Beataranga, who came from Kānanuj about 964 (A.D.) to perform certain ceremonies for King Adisur of Gaur. Sri Krishna's father, Jay Nārāyan Talāpātra, who was settled at Karai in Bogra, had already received the two parganas of Taraf Karai and Tappe Hindi in 1710 from Murshid Kuli Khān.

Sri Krishna's son, Chand Ray, also rendered good services to the next Nawāb, and on the ground that the machinations of the late owners had made it almost impossible to pay the revenue out of the assets of the Mymensingh pargana, the now very valuable pargana of Jafarshāhi was thrown in and no extra revenue demanded. Its then owners, the descendants of one Musnad Ali, who had succeeded Isā Khān, had fallen into serious financial trouble at about the same time as the Nandi Dattas. From this date the two parganas have had a common history and have paid revenue jointly.

By each of his wives, Sri Krishna left two sons, Ray Chand and Hari Nārāyan having predeceased him. These soon

quarrelled, and the Rays (sons of Svarbajaya) settled in Krisnapur, and the sons of Maheswari, who kept the title of Chaudhuri, settled in Malancha, both existing villages in Jafarshāhi. Shortly afterwards the separation of Ganga Nārāyan Chaudhuri from his brothers led to his taking up his residence in the neighbouring village of Mahiramkul. Sri Krishna himself lived in the Mymensingh pargana at Pokāinagar; it seems a pity that the Sanyāsi rebellion, with the settlement of robber gangs at Sanyāsiganj (afterwards the site of the Jamalpur cantonment) and the burning of the Melancha catcherry, was successful in driving the family back to the eastern pargana. The present homes of the Rays and Chaudhuris at Gauripur, Ramgopalpur and Kalipur are surrounded with swamps and compare very unfavourably with the higher and healthier and more picturesque villages in the centre of the Jafarshāhi pargana.

Until 1908 the 8 annas share of Taraf Ray was held jointly by the descendants of Krishna Kishor and Krishna Gopal, but at the Permanent Settlement the pargana was settled in four equal shares as separate *tauzis*. Jugal Kishor, the adopted son of Krishna Gopal, tried to prevent his uncle's widows adopting a son, but a *sanad* of Warren Hastings, dated 12th July 1774, recognized the title of the widows. They then moved from Gauripur to Ramgopalpur, where they devoted themselves to building temples and establishing religious foundations.

On the death of Ratnamāla, the Sadar Adalat again defeated the ambition of Jugal Kishor and gave the whole 4 annas share to Nārāyani. Nārāyani's great grandson, Kashi Kishor, was the first Honorary Magistrate in this district. His son, the present Rājā of Rāmgorālpur, is the sole proprietor of the senior 4 annas share. He was made a Rāi Bāhādur in 1895 and a Rājā in 1909. Of Jugal Kishor Ray, the founder of the Gauripur family, Mr. Wroughton wrote thus in his report of 1788 :—"He manages his own business, and by his prudence, care and abilities is a man of considerable property. His share is by far the best cultivated, and the ryots are contented and happy. His riches, regularity in business and punctuality in payment give him an undoubted advantage over Syam Chand and Rudra Chand." His services in the Sanyāsi rebellion were also much appreciated by the English Government. But his depredations in Tappe Singdha, where his *lāthiāls* looted the two great markets of Mohanganj and Lakshmiganj, were reported to the then Commissioner Mr. Douglas, and a full enquiry was ordered by Sir John Shore.

Finally he was acquitted for lack of evidence by Mr. Wroughton.

Jugal Kishor's share descended through an adopted grandson to Rājendra Kishor, who again died childless. His widow Bisveswari Debi enjoyed a fourth of the estate (Gauripur 4 annas) as a separate estate until her death a short time ago. Her adopted son, Brajendra Kishor, who brought the well-known *swadeshi* case against Mr. Clarke, the Collector of the district, in connection with the Jamālpur riots in 1907, is the sole proprietor of the second 4 annas share.

The share of Taraf Chaudhuri.—The following account from Wroughton of the third or Kalipur 4 annas illustrates the important part played by adoption in the history of these zamindār families :—"This mahāl is the property of Harnath, the adopted son of Ganga Narāyan, second son of Sri Krishna ; this young man is the principal cause of the present dispute. At first he put himself under the protection of Syamchand, and the two estates were managed jointly. Being a very young boy, rumours were started that he had not been properly adopted, and Syamchand was induced to usurp such an authority as made him justly fearful of being deprived of his right. He died in 1792, and his widow Ganga Debi adopted a son, Krishna Nath, whose adoption was declared invalid by the Provincial Court in 1828." Thus Harnath's 4 annas share passed to the sons of his sister Gauri Debi (a) Srikanta Lahiri Chaudhuri, (b) Kamal Kanta Lahiri Chaudhuri, and (c) Uma Kanta Lahiri Chaudhuri, each receiving 1-6-2-2 share.

(a) *Bara Taraf.*—Sri Kanta was the eldest, and his line is still called "Bara Taraf." He had two sons (1) Nil Kanta, and (2) Ratna Kanta ; each got 0-13-1-1. Nil Kanta's adopted son Abhayakanta left a son, Bijay Kanta, who is the present proprietor of the share, having attained his majority in 1908. Ratna Kanta had two sons, Tārā Kanta and Surjya Kanta. This estate was joint, but at the death of Tārā Kanta it was divided, each getting 0-6-2-2. Tārā's widow adopted Jāmini Kanta, who has let out his 0-6-2-2 share in patni to Dharani Kanta Lāhiri Chaudhuri. Gauripur has bought tauzi 77, the other 6-2-2 share. Surjya died without heirs male, and his widow adopted Abani Kanta, an extravagant person, who has been forced to sell most of his property. It was bought by Brajendra Kishor Ray Chaudhuri of Gauripur, Swarnamayi Debi of Krishnapur and Dharani Kanta Lāhiri of Kālipur.

(b) *Madhyam Taraf.*—Kamala Kanta's grandson Giriya Kanta inherited his father Syāmkanta's share ; he died in 1907

leaving four sons, his widow being appointed executrix (Bhabatārini Debya). She is at present managing the property.

(c) *Chhota Taraf*.—Uma Kanta's son Tārini Kanta purchased also a share of the Sherpur pargana. He died in 1884, leaving an adopted son Dharani, the present proprietor.

The owner of the remaining 4 annas share of the pargana was Lakshmi Nārāyan, fourth son of Sri Krishna. For some years he lived with his brother Ganga Nārāyan at Malancha, and then removed to his father's ancestral home at Bokāinagar, where he died, leaving three sons, Syamchand, Rudrachand and Gobindachand. Rudra remained at the ancestral home. Gobinda went to Golakpur, while Syamchand built a separate house near the ancestral home.

Harishchandra, the grandson of Syamchandra, moved to Golakpur in 1853. This share has been held under the Court of Wards since 1911. Rai Satis Chandra Chaudhuri Bāhādur, who received his title in 1907, is the representative of Rudra's branch.

But for the extravagances of one of Gobinda's heirs, Hārachand, which brought about the alienation of his share, the descendants of Sri Krishna Chaudhuri would have the creditable record of still keeping the whole of the original zamindāries in their hands.

Netrakona—Is the head-quarters town of the Netrakona subdivision. It is situated in bends of the Mogra river which make it practically an island. The *maidan* is rather small, but there is a fine tank built by the Gauripur landlords. Big flats are brought up from Nārāyanganj by launches in the rains and there is a large trade in jute. The District Board bungalow has a good site on the Mymensingh side of the river. The other buildings are very ordinary and inadequate.

Nikli-Dampara—Is the chief jute centre on the Dhana river. Nikli is a large Government estate, one of the few managed khās by the Subdivisional Officer of Kishorganj.

Nilganj—Is the port of Kishorganj and connects it with all the waterlogged areas of the north and east of the district. As it is on the railway from Kishorganj it should be capable of great development. There is quite a fair quantity of high land on both banks of the river, at present covered with very dilapidated godowns.

Pingna—Is situated on a dried up *khāl* two or three miles from the main bank of the Jamuna. It is only important as possessing a Munsiff's Court and a High School.

Purbadhala—Is a fair sized village on the banks of the Dhala river known further along its course as the Mogra. It is the home of one branch of the so-called Rāj family of Tauzi No. 137 descended from Rājā Raghunath Singh. It contains important cutcherries of Hem Babu of Pukhuria and Rājā Bāhādur Sashi Kanta of Mymensingh, whose quarrels resulted in serious breaches of the peace in 1906. There are two *hāts*. The water-supply is derived from the fine open *bil* known as Rajdhala.

Pukhuria.—This pargana well illustrates the Muhammadan principle that all land was the property of the State and the zamindārs liable to constant change as well as to personal penalties, if they did not pay up the whole of the profits promptly.

In Todar Mal's settlement the pargana was apparently one with Joānshāhi in the extreme east of the district, though until 1793 it was part of Rājshāhi and not in Mymensingh at all. Isā Khān held it for a short time and Murshid Kuli Khān gave it to Ispinjir Khān and Manohar Khān. These persons defaulted and were taken prisoners to Murshidābād, and Rāi Raghunandan, the Prime Minister of the Nawāb, received a *sanad* for the pargana in the name of his brother Rājā Rām-jiban. Raghunandan's heirs were his son's widow, Rani Bhābāni of Nātor, his grandson Rām Krishna and his daughter Tāra Sundari. Rām Krishna took settlement from the English in 1791 and agreed to pay Rs. 70,662 as revenue. Two years later he fell in arrears, and Bhubanendra Nārāyan Ray of Puthia bought the estate at auction for Rs. 62,100. The new landlord also found it impossible to raise the revenue, and Government authorised the raising of the rents from one rupee to Re. 1-6-8 per *pakhi*, an increment which is still to be traced in the collection papers as the *Rasad Bār*.

Bhubanendra had considerable difficulty in taking possession owing to the machinations of Dayārām, the ancestor of the Dighāpatia family, and others of the *amlas* of the late zamindār, who concealed the estate papers and kept him out of possession of some of the most valuable mahāls. Nothing could be realised from the Bālasutidigar Taraf (Bāzē Tāluk) with a revenue of Rs. 17,000 and the Chatalia Mahāl with a revenue of Rs. 16,573, which Dayārām had got attached by the Civil Court on the ground that they were valid tenures granted to Tāra Sundari Devi and the Thākurs of Pakuria in Rājshāhi and did not come under the title of the purchaser. Accordingly, Bhubanendra applied to the Collector, Mr. Tufton, to

take the whole pargana into *khās* possession and to grant *masahārā*. This officer reported the case to the Board. They replied that unless Dayārām claimed the lands as proprietor, there should be no difficulty in turning him out through the ordinary processes of law. Mr. Vanderheyden, however, dissented. "Though Government at the time of sale does not guarantee any given quantity of land or any given resources, yet it certainly must be understood to guarantee the possession of the thing sold. To sell a thing and afterwards leave the party purchasing to his own means of obtaining possession would appear to me highly unjust." "Mr. Buller and Mr. Hatch agreed with Mr. Vanderheyden on the ground that, the demands of revenue upon the purchaser could not be suspended on any plea of the property being in dispute; section 5 of Regulation 44 of 1793 voids all engagements between the former proprietors and the undertenants." The Collector was accordingly directed to put the purchaser in possession of the whole pargana, but, whether as the result of the civil litigation or for other reasons, it is certain that his intervention came to nothing and neither of the *mahāls* referred to above was restored to the zamindār of the pargana. The Māhārājā of Nātor, the descendant of Tāra Sundari Devi's nephew, to whom she made a gift of it in 1795, is still in possession of the Bāze Tāluk which was at last recognised as an independent Government Estate, Tauzi No. 13206, in 1910.

Bayard fixed the revenue at Rs. 70,762, but the Tālukdars in 1807 were Rs. 31,800 in arrears and there was danger of the estate being sold again. Jagat Nārāyan died in Rājshāhi in 1817, leaving a widow Bhubanmoyi. She applied for a partition of her 12 annas share and Bhairabananda Ray, minor, failing to pay his share, Government purchased this 4 annas and became a party to the partition which was completed in 1843. Raja Bhairabananda recovered his share on attaining his majority after threatening a civil suit. This marks the change of theory as to the ownership of zamindāries under British rule: none of Rājā Bhairabananda's predecessors could have contemplated any such action.

The original tauzi No. 122 was retained for the 12 annas share of the Rāni Bhuban Moyi Devi. She adopted a son Rājā Harendra Nārāyan. But her daughter Kasiswari Devi contested the validity of the adoption and a suit followed, which was compromised. Raja Harendra Nārāyan gave 2 annas share to Kasiswari. Her son got this share partitioned as Tauzi No. 6100. It is still possessed by his successor Fabu Bhaba Prasād Khān

Chaudhuri of Puthia. Rāni Hemanta Kumāri Devi of Puthia possesses the other 10 annas share.

Raja Bhairabananda's 4 annas share was Tauzi No. 4806. He sold two annas and gave the remaining two annas in Patni to a Ehuya from the Pabna district, who is the grandfather of Babu Hem Chandra Chaudhuri, the present proprietor. The family seat was originally at Ambaria, a pleasantly situated village on the bank of the Bangsa river, but this place was found too unhealthy owing to its nearness to the Madhupur Jungle. A move was made to Subarnakhāli on the Jamuna. A few years ago, the river completely cut away this site and Hemnagar was the third choice. At great cost big tanks were excavated in order to build *pukka* buildings on their banks, 12 feet above the level of the extremely low plain all around, and a dazzling temple of brick and glass erected.

Padma Lochan brought a suit for the separation of his two annas as Tauzi No. 5513 in 1842 and in 1854 his son bought the superior interest in the remaining two annas.

Sarisabari—Is a town with large godowns and presses and a considerable European population in the jute season. It was made into a Union for sanitary administration in 1910. The income raised from subscriptions is about Rs. 1,400 and the District Board contributes Rs. 600

Sherpur—Is an important Municipality 9 miles north of Jamālpur. It is the head-quarters of the landlords of the Sherpur pargana, but the residence of Govinda Prasad in the 3 annas *sāhām* was made over to the Susung Rājā on one of his visits, it being a tradition of that family never to take a meal on land other than their own.

In 1807 a separate Magistrate's Court was established at Kāliganj (the old name of the Sherpur bazār) and for some years a garrison was established there to act against Gāro marauders and to watch the bank of the Brahmaputra, which in the 18th century extended from Jamālpur to Sherpur. Practically all that now remains of the cantonments is the cemetery.

The Sherpur landlords have been Honorary Magistrates for a long term of years. The Rāi Pāhādur Rādhā Ballabh Chaudhuri was invested with powers to take complaints in 1891, and the same powers were given to the head of the 9-anna house in 1910. His father Har Chandra Chaudhuri had been gazetted with similar powers in 1875. The result is that Sherpur and Nālitabāri almost form a separate subdivision, and

bring very little work to the sub-divisional Officer of Jamālpur.

The landlords maintain a hospital and a *dharmasālā* which costs Rs. 10,000 annually. The 9-anna *bāri* contains a library which boasts of some manuscripts 500 years old.

The biweekly *hāt* is densely crowded and in 1907 a petty-quarrel about vegetables led to a serious attack on the barracks of the punitive police by an excited mob. Further references to Sherpur will be found in the history chapter.

Sherpur Pargana—was annexed to Bengal when Sylhet was conquered by the Muhammadans in 1384, but was in the hands of the Koches until Husain Shāh colonized it with Muhammadans in the 16th century. It was subsequently one of the 32 mahāls of Todār Mal in 1582, with a revenue of Rs. 41,140-4, and was one of the 22 parganas granted to Isā Khān. The comrades in arms of Isā Khān, however, wrested some of them from him, 4 Majhlases taking Khālajurī and Nasirujal and four Ghāzis Sherpur and Phāwāl.

The old name of Daskahania is traditionally ascribed to the fact that it cost *das kāhan* (*i.e.*, 10 multiplied by 1,280 cowries or Rs. 10) to cross the ferry from Jamālpur.* Its new name comes from Sher Ali, the last of the Ghāzis. This chieftain is said to have coveted the daughter of a Kabirāj in Darsa in the Durgapur thānā and put her husband, Ram Ballabh, a kanungo in the Nawāb's service at that cutcherry, to death. His wife escaped to the Nawāb's Court, and this prince's Subahdar, Aziz Khan, punished Sher Ali by giving the pargana to Ram Ballabh's son, Rām Nāth. The original home of this Vaidya family was in Murshidābād district. It did not move to Sherpur till 1675.

Rām Nāth had three sons, Srikrishna, Sriballabh and Gopāl. A portion of the pargana, about 2 annas, subsequently known as Sāgardi, was separated by a gift from Rām Govinda, son of Sriballabh, to a member of the Mazumdar family of Kanda in the Dacca district. The rest of the pargana passed to Jogajiban, son of Srikrishna, who left four sons, Jay Nārāyan, Kandarpa, Mod Nārāyan and Hari Nārāyan. When Jay Nārāyan died, Mod Nārāyan took on the management for Surja Nārāyan, the eldest son of Jay Nārāyan. When the latter attained his majority, the revenue was hopelessly in arrears and he was put in jail. The estate was actually settled with one Binod Nārāyan, but thanks to the exertions of Krishna Prosād Nāg, it was restored to the family by the favour of the Nawāb. On

* Buchanan's explanation is that 10 kahans was the khalsa or real part of the revenue as opposed to the jāgirs.

the death of Surja Nārāyan in 1770, the first partition took place, the descendants of Jay Nārāyan and Kandarpa getting 9 annas and the descendants of Mod and Hari Nārāyan 7 annas.

In 1774 (B.C.) Kirtti Nārāyan, the grandson of Jay Nārāyan, who was managing the whole pargana in this year, was put into jail for arrears of revenue by Patterson, Judge of Dacca, and at the same time the troubles with Gāro tribes on the north of the pargana came to a head. Kirtti Nārāyan was wounded by an arrow and died. His wife committed "Satī." The Buxari Barkandazes, or mercenaries, who were recruited to fight the Gāros, rebelled and twice carried off members of the family to the hills.

Pratāp Nārāyan managed the estate for Kirtti Nārāyan's minor sons, Krishna Chandra and Rāj Chandra. Warren Hastings upheld Pratāp against the descendants of Sri Gopāl who claimed the estate. Meanwhile Brajanāth, grandson of Mod Nārāyan, took over the management of the 7 annas share.

Pratāp separated his $4\frac{1}{2}$ annas share from that of his nephews. The 7 annas was also partitioned, $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas going to Rāmnāth, grandson of Mod Nārāyan by his son Raghunath, $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas to Brajanāth, Mod Nārāyan's other grandson, and 3 annas to Sibnāth, grandson of Hari Nārāyan. Thus the descendants of Kandarpa were alone left without a share. As the result of fierce litigation, his grandson Upendra Nārāyan and his daughter-in-law Bhawāni Chaudhurāni were allotted $3\frac{1}{2}$ annas, $5\frac{1}{2}$ being kept for the elder branch. Of the 3 annas, Brajanāth Chaudhury, the founder of the Arāiani zamindāri, got 1 anna (Tauzi No. 141) as a reward for his help, thus incidentally restoring equality between the two so-called 9-anna and 7-anna houses.

The partition apparently took 15 years. An amin was deputed in 1809, but when no progress had been made by 1813, the Board called for an explanation, and Mr. Packenham, in recommending the deputation of Mr. Maxwell for three years with the powers of an Assistant Judge and Magistrate to settle the disputes and to look after the partition, wrote as follows:—

"Great blame is certainly imputable to the amins, but in Shergpur they have no common obstruction to surmount. The zamindāri is one of the most lucrative in the country, and has long been the seat of the most serious affrays and has been one of the greater sources of troubles and annoyance to the judicial powers at this station. The zamindārs and tālukdārs are bold and daring, and at the same time being rich, it is more

the Amins' interest to side with the most powerful than to perform their duty by doing justice towards the weak. There is also an intricate investigation delegated to the Amin which holds out strong temptation to him to be corrupt or, otherwise, personal risk of insult and even assault." In 1794 a warrant was issued for arrest of the 3 annas proprietor, but cancelled by the Board who ordered that "no proprietor of land shall be imprisoned for arrears who has landed property which, if sold, will be sufficient to make good the deficiency." By 1820 the partition was finished, but the cost being realised as *abwābs* from the ryots caused fresh breaches of the peace.

In 1833 two bands of Pāgal Panthis under Janhu and Dobrāj looted Sherpur and set fire to the thana. Mr. Sarrel, Joint-Magistrate, with police *barkandāzes* defeated Dobrāj, who later surprised him and carried off four of his men. The Collector had to send military assistance; 150 men from Jamāl-pur under Captain Seal surprised a camp of 4,000 men near Jelangi north of Goalpāra at the foot of the hills, and we hear of no further trouble.

The share of Kirtti Nārāyan's children is now possessed as Tauzi No. 139 by Rāi Bāhādur Chāru Chandra Chaudhuri and his two brothers. To Pratap's 2½ annas there were many claimants, and Kishori Mohan had to part with much of the property as the price of his success. Goālgāon and other big *māhāls* were alienated to Māhārājā Surja Kanta Achārjyā and three-quarters of Tauzi No. 4082 was sold for Rs. 1,80,000 to Rājā Bisan Chand Dudhuria, who, however, gave it back as a permanent *patni* interest to the vendor. Jnanendra Mohan Chaudhuri, a Deputy Magistrate, and his brother are now the proprietors of the 2½ annas *zamindari* and some smaller interest in Tauzi No. 138.

The principal representatives of the 7 annas branch are Babu Gopāl Dās and Babu Satindra Kumar Chaudhuri. The lands of their Tauzis 142 and 143 and 5 *ganḍas* of 144 are indivisible and are known as the Arāi Anna *zamindāri*. They have also shares in 138, 140, 141 and 4083. Rāi Pāhādur Radha Ballabh Chaudhuri, who got his title in 1889, has a one-anna share in Tauzi No. 4083.

Susung.—The founder of the family was a Brāhman, Somēshwar Pāthak, who came from Kanauj towards the end of the 13th century and made himself master of the Gāros on the lower hills between Sylhet and Mymensingh by the help of the plainsmen and of a band of Sādhus, from whose good company his territory was known as "Susanga." He forced

the King of the Khasia Hills to cede some villages, and he obtained possession of the Husain Pratal pargana of Sylhet. Someshwar's son, Budhimanta Kānta, was the first of his family to marry his daughter to a Barendra Kulin Brāhman, and this custom has since been kept up. The eldest surviving son continued to succeed his father for the next three generations. Jānakināth in the sixth generation from the founder is said to have stolen a 7-year old bride for his grandson from the Rāja of Tāhirpur (in Rājshāhi), the Kulin of Kulins.

In the time of the next ruler Raghunāth the Gāros gave considerable trouble, and the family sacrificed its hitherto independent position by asking help from Akbar's Viceroy Mān Singh, and promising to pay a tribute of *agar* wood. Raghunāth fought with Mān Singh against Chānd Ray of Bikampur, and the present capital of the family, Durgapur, got its name from the Dasābhiya or family idol of Chānd Ray, with which Raghunāth returned as his share of the spoils. Among other stories to show Raghunāth's miraculous strength, it is narrated that on his wedding night, taking his bride on his back, he fought his way through the forces of his hereditary enemy, the Joārdār or Chieftain of Baulā, who had arranged the marriage solely with the treacherous purpose of getting the young prince within his power.

Raghunāth's son, Rāmnāth, went to Delhi and accepted a *sanad* from the Emperor Jahāngīr. He is said to have adopted the family motto *Matināsh* because of his folly in refusing to accept *sanads* at Jahāngīr's hands for six neighbouring parganas in the names of his six brothers. When he got back from Delhi he found they were all dead. Rāmnāth was succeeded by his nephew Rāmjīban, but before his death he created a *maurasi tāluk* in favour of Jadabendra, which, being inherited by Harirām Bhāduri* was separately settled at the decennial settlement as Tauzi No. 137. Henceforth the interest of the Susung Rājās has been confined to the remaining 14 annas of the original parganā, Tauzi No. 136.

In Aurangzeb's time the reigning Rājā stopped the payment of tribute, but before he could take steps to fortify his capital, he was taken prisoner to Murshidābād and compelled to embrace the Muhammadan faith and marry a Muhammadan girl under the name of Abdul Rahmān. Later on, when he proposed to divide his estate between his Hindu and Muhammadan families, the Muhammadan Government apparently

* The so-called Rāj families of Purbadhala and Ghagra are Hariram's descendants.

repented, and sided with the son of the Hindu wife, Rono Singh, in whose favour Abdul Rahmān abdicated in 1735, taking Dihi Mahādeb out of the estate for his own maintenance and for succession to the Muhammadan branch of his family.

Rono Singh's son Rājā Kishor is credited with the establishment of various Hajang families at the foot of the hills to help in his elephant-catching operations. The kheddah profits not proving sufficient to pay the revenue regularly, Rājā Kishor and his brother were taken prisoners to Dacca in 1757. They were sentenced to daily whipping for a week and then to be blown from a cannon's mouth if the money was not paid, but were saved by the unexpected occupation of Dacca by the British forces.

The decennial settlement was made with Rāj Singh, and about this time the title of Rājā was recognised by the Company. Unfortunately for the family fortunes, Rāj Singh left three sons, who all registered their names in the Collectorate and in 1827 began to collect rents separately. When Jagannāth died in 1829, his widow Indramani registered her name in the Collectorate, and when Gopinath died in 1833 his widow Harasundari was also registered. It was not until 1842, when Harasundari migrated to Sankarpur with her two daughters and applied for a partition under Regulation XIX of 1814, that the eldest brother Biswanāth put forward his claims to be the sole proprietor of the estate on the ground of a family custom of primogeniture. It says much for the strength of Biswanāth's claim that in spite of the many years in which his conduct might easily have been held to bring in estoppel against him, he won his case in the lower court in 1844 and also on appeal before the sadar court in 1847. He was not so successful in turning his sisters-in-law out of possession, and in 1856 the sadar court, reversing the decision of the lower court that family custom was established in favour of the succession of the eldest son, gave one-third of Tauzi 136 to Indramoni's adopted son Srikrishna.

By this time Prān Krishna had succeeded his father. In 1861 he induced the sadar court to set aside Srikrishna's adoption and to give him Jagannāth's share as the nearest heir, and encouraged by the Privy Council's rejection on default of Harasundari's appeal against the order disallowing the partition, in 1862 he again brought the question of the family custom before the courts. He got a decree in the Court of the Principal Sadar Amin, but after his death the decision was reversed by the Privy Council in 1868. Thus Harasundari's 4 annas 13

gandas 1 kara and 1 krānti of the original 16 annas pargana finally passed out of the hands of the Susang family. Hari-moni's two daughters Barada and Pramada each got 2 annas and Ram Chandra Mazumdar 13 gandas 1 kara 1 krānti by purchase, in addition to the various permanent tenures which his intrigues in the family had already secured out of the estate.

In 1841 a dispute about some Gāro mahāls with the Government had been settled in favour of the Rāj by the Revenue Commissioner of Assam. Further litigation on the subject of the boundaries was carried on by Prān Krishna and his son, but before the Privy Council could formulate a decision, Government by Act XXII of 1869 excluded the Gāro Hills from the jurisdiction of all courts. Rājkrishna won his case, but was obliged to accept the life-title of Māhārājā Bahadur and a sum of Rs. 1,50,000 as a somewhat inadequate compensation for his rights in the hills.

The present generation, following the example of Rājkrishna and his brothers, reverted to the old custom by which the eldest son manages the whole estate. One uncle, however, Jagat Krishna claimed partition in 1896. He was put off with certain 16 annas mauzas, but from this date the joint estate has been under a private manager, who is supposed to act in accordance with the unanimous opinion of all the proprietors. The continual litigation has impoverished the estate. Its collection cannot be more than 3 lakhs, while the revenue and cesses are Rs. 11,254 and Rs. 10,663, respectively.

The joint estate by means of purchases and permanent lease from the heirs of Harimoni and others now comprises 9 annas 15 gandas 3 karas 1 krānti in zamindāri and 3 annas 3 gandas 2 krānti in patni right in Tauzi 136 considered as 16 annas. The other proprietors are Rājā Ramesh Chandra Singha, son of Jagat Krishna, Rājā Sashi Kanta Achārjya and the Narāyandahar Mazumdars. By a friendly partition in most villages the shares of the Māhārājā, Romesh and Sashi Kanta Achārjya are combined in the hands of one or the other over all tenancies except rent-free tenures.

Tangail—Is the head-quarters of the south-western subdivision. It is quite a pretty place with plenty of trees and well laid out roads. In 1912 a big basin of the Lohajang river was banked up, and converted into a park and playground. Santosh, the home of the Kāgmāri zamindārs, is two miles away on the other side of the river.

Tangail has been considered as the head-quarters of a new

district, but the communications with Porabāri, the nearest steamer station, are too bad, and it is doubtful if the railway to Serājganj can be extended across the river so as to touch any point near Tangāil, as there is no permanent high bank south of Pingna. Tangāil has a bad reputation for malaria, which is hardly deserved in years when the Brahmaputra has been in high flood. The dispensary has recently been made over by its founders, the Santosh family, to the Municipality. There are no important buildings.

Tarail—Is an important trading centre on the river, which running south from Gog Bazār makes the *boro* growing area to the east an unapproachable country with characteristics all its own.

Tappe Hazradi.—Hazrādi was one of the so-called 22 parganas comprising practically the whole of the present Mymensingh district granted to Isā Khān in 1597 by the Emperor Akbar. The following seems to be the complete list :—(1) Hazrādi, (2) Hosenshāhi, (3) Joār Hosenpur, (4) Darjibāzu, (5) Katraba with Kurikhāi, (6) Maheshwardi, (7) Singdha, (8) Bhawāl, (9) Pāitkara, (10) Gangamandal, (11) Nasirujīāl, (12) Khaliājūrī, (13) Jafarshāhi, (14) Mymensingh, (15) Alāpsingh, (16) Joānshāhi, (17) Sherpur, (18) Barabāju, (19) Kāgmāri, (20) Atia, (21) Sonargāon, (22) Bardakhat with Bardakhat Māgra in Sarkar Sonargaon.*

Isā Khān Masnad Ali, the most noted of the so-called Bara Bhuyas of Bengal, was the son of Kālī Das Gazdāni, a lāis Rajput of Guḍh, who turned Muhammadan under the title of Sulaiman Khān, when Husain Shah was ruler of Bengal (1493-1520) and rose to the position of Dewān under Husain Shāh's successors, Bāhādur Shāh and Jalāluddin. Isā Khān's mother was a daughter of Jalāluddin, and in the early years of Akbar's reign he took advantage of the minority of Jalāluddin's son to establish himself as an independent prince with headquarters at Khizirpur and Sonargāon, both near Nārāyanganj. In 1582, when Todar Mal settled Bengal on behalf of Akbar, Isā Khān rendered great assistance and was left in charge of Sarkārs Bajuha and Sonargāon. He fortified Sonargāon and built several other forts. This raised the Emperor's suspicions, and Isā found himself attacked by Sāhabāz Khān in command of an imperial army. In spite of some early successes, Khizirpur was captured, and Isā Khān seeing that he was powerless

* Mr. Stapleton thinks that to make 22 Kāgmāri and Atia should go together instead of the two Bardakhats.

against the full force of the Delhi throne, devoted his attention to establishing a principality north of the Brāhmaputra at the expense of the Koch chieftains. He turned Lakhan out of Jangalbāri and then extended his sway to Goalpāra, building forts at Rangamatia and Sherpur. In 1592 he had to meet a new army under Mān Singh. Sonargaon was lost, and Isā Khān was besieged in Agārasindur. After two days' hard fighting, he challenged Mān Singh to single combat and won the admiration of his foe by returning his sword after he had disarmed him. He was taken to Delhi and imprisoned by Akbar, who released him on hearing the full story of the fight at Agārasindur. He was given the title of Masnad Ali and sent back with a *sanad* for the 22 parganas, four of which, Khāliājūrī, Nasurijiāl, Bhawal and Sherpur were made over to the courtiers who accompanied him back from Delhi.

Isā Khān died at Baktarpur, leaving two sons Musā Khān and Mahammad Khān. The grandson of Mahammad Khān, Hayat Khān, got a new *sanad* for 11 of the 22 parganas, including Pardakhat, Pardakhat Mogra, Kurikhai, Singdha, Sonargāon, Katraba, Darzibāzu, Joār Hosēnpur, Hazrādi, Maheswardi and Jafarshāhi. His son Haibat Khān separated from his cousins and established himself at Haibatnagar Nagua, 6 miles west of Jangalbāri, taking the four parganas Bardakhat, Sonargāon, Mogra and Joār Hosēnpur, to which were afterwards added Maheswardi, Singdha and Darzibazu by right of inheritance from his cousin Satif Khān, whose only daughter, Fatima Bibi, he had married. Haibat Khān's son Abdullah failed to obey Lord Clive's summons to take settlement, and the former four parganas were settled with other zamindars.

During the minority of Abdullah's two sons the remaining three parganas which had been inherited from Fatima were settled with one Golām Ali of Bānglābazar, Dacca, but the settlement was cancelled and a new *sanad* granted. The present proprietress of Haibatnagar, in the fourth generation from Abdullah, is married to Dewān Alim Dād Khān, a descendant of the Jangalbāri branch.

When the two branches separated, four sons of Mānahr Khān, grandson of Musā Khān, survived. As has been seen 3 parganas devolved from the eldest son to the Haibatnagar branch, Latif Khān living at Jangalbāri had 10 annas of Hazrādi and Mahābat Khān with his home at Jafrabād had 6 annas. Adam Khān received Kurikhāi, but this was soon sold to Bhabani Kishor Acharjya of Muktagacha. The fifth son's share

was Katraba, but on his death it was divided between Latif and Mahabat in the same shares as Hazrādi. Latif Khān had two sons. The share of the younger "Panchani" was squandered away. The Para Panchani was also so mismanaged, that the Katraba pargana had to be sold at auction, and on the advice of a Deputy Collector in 1800 the Hazrādi pargana was made over to Government for a permanent mālikānā of Rs. 3,840, and the existing lessees registered as khārijā tālukdārs under separate tauzi numbers. In 1837 the revenue-free mahāl of Jangalbāri was made khās by Government, but Rahimdad lodged a suit and obtained Rs. 32,000 as mesne profits.

The Aich family of Jasodāl near Kishorganj, as described in an article by Mr. Stapleton in the "J. A. S. B." of 1910, is also connected with this pargana. The family are Kayasthas, descended from one Bhuban Aich. Devibar Aich, sixth in descent from Bhuban Aich, was the first of the family to settle in Mymensingh, and his grandson Govinda Hāzri was given the two parganas of Hāzradi and Hosenshāhi by Alāuddin Husain or Nasarat Shāh about 1520. There was fighting between Govinda's son Rājā Ganik Chandra and the great Isā Khān, which resulted in the death of the former by a treacherous stratagem. Local tradition says that a battle at Kukurdia took place after Isā Khān's return from Delhi with Akbar's *sanad* for the 22 parganas in 1594, but it is more probable that Isā Khān was master of all the country round Jangalbāri as a result of his campaigns against the Koches before 1586.

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